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ABSTRACT

This manual describes Project CREST (Clinical Regional Support Teams), a community project established in Gainesville, Florida, to supplement State probation services by providing professional counseling to delinquent youth. The project uses a dual treatment approach in which, on the one hand, probation officers impose restrictions, while on the other hand, CREST counseling teams establish supportive, caring relationships with the youth. CREST counseling teams consist of volunteer graduate counseling students from the University of Florida and undergraduates from a Gainesville community college. A description includes: (1) the history, development, and funding of Project CREST as a cooperative effort between the University of Florida and the State's Youth Services Program, with community, State, and Federal support; (2) project organization and operations, including staff recruitment and training, administration, cooperative relationships, treatment philosophy, service delivery, and the role of citizen advisory boards; (3) evaluation activities, program budget/costs, and guidelines for designing evaluations of similar projects; and (4) steps for planning and implementing CREST programs in other communities. (Author/MJL)

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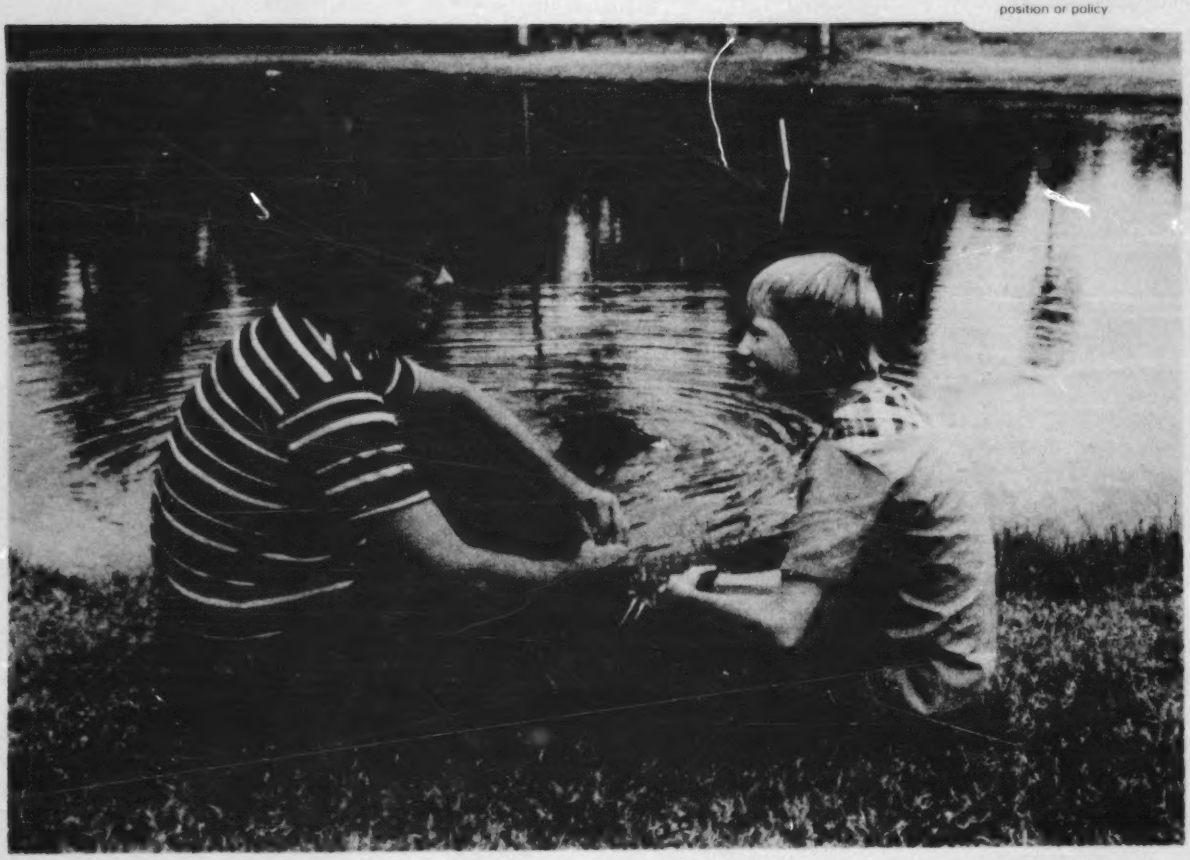
Project CREST
Gainesville, Florida



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AN EXEMPLARY PROJECT

Project CREST
Gainesville, Florida

by

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND GUIDE TO THE MANUAL

1.1 Introduction

Project CREST (Clinical Regional Support Teams), located in Gainesville, Florida, is designed to supplement state probation services by providing professional counseling to delinquent youth in three counties in North Central Florida. The typical CREST client is a young felon or repeat misdemeanant who has not responded to the state's diversion program and has consequently been adjudicated delinquent and placed on probation. Project CREST is intended for those youngsters who need more support or supervision than a probation officer alone is able to provide.

The uniqueness of Project CREST is its "dual treatment" approach. On the one hand, probation officers impose restrictions on the youngsters, monitor their behavior, and invoke sanctions when that proves to be necessary. In contrast, CREST counselors try to establish a supportive relationship with these youngsters, helping them work through their problems and reminding them that people do care about them. The goals of the counseling staff are to help these youth develop a more positive view of themselves and their community, to increase their self-awareness, and, consequently, to change their antisocial behavior.

The heart of Project CREST is its volunteer counseling staff, which is drawn from the graduate program in counselor education at the University of Florida at Gainesville. Students who choose to work with Project CREST gain academic credit and valuable experience in exchange for the counseling services they provide. CREST is uniformly viewed as a valuable field experience by these students and their faculty advisors.

Another crucial component of Project CREST has been its efforts to involve the entire community in the fight against juvenile delinquency. Advisory boards made up of interested and prominent citizens are in place in all three counties served by CREST, each responsible for overseeing CREST's activities

and organizing other efforts to help troubled youngsters. The project's involvement with community leaders has clearly helped create an atmosphere of support for these youth.

Evaluation studies of Project CREST's effectiveness strongly suggest that this program is a valuable addition to standard probationary services. For this reason, Project CREST has been designated an Exemplary Project by the National Institute of Justice. It is CREST's success in integrating academic, law enforcement and community resources to help juvenile offenders that makes this project worthy of replication in other communities.

1.2 Overview of Project CREST

CREST began in 1972 when Columbia County received an LEAA block grant for a counseling program that would utilize graduate students in counselor education. With the support and encouragement of probation officers from the state's Youth Services Program (YSP), the project quickly became a respected partner in the area's juvenile justice system. Since 1976, financing for Project CREST has been provided by the state of Florida.

At the present time, CREST operates in three counties, with a counseling team assigned to each jurisdiction. These teams, which work out of a small central office in Gainesville, consist of four to six volunteer counselors and tutors. The counselors come from the University of Florida's Department of Counselor Education, where they are enrolled in either a two-year graduate specialist or longer-term doctoral program. These students are required to work in a community counseling agency as part of their degree work. A smaller number of CREST workers, known as counselor aides, come from Santa Fe Community College, which is also located in Gainesville. These undergraduate students serve primarily as tutors or as "big brothers" or "sisters." A team leader supervises each group; these leaders, who are doctoral candidates at the university, are experienced CREST counselors.

Structured supervision of the counseling staff is vital to Project CREST's success. All new volunteers participate in an intensive 12-hour training workshop before they are assigned any clients. Thereafter, the counselors' work is reviewed by professionals representing the three components of the project. First, the volunteers are required to attend weekly Project CREST staff and team meetings, and they meet individually with either the project director or their team leader at frequent intervals. The CREST counselors also meet weekly with each client's probation officer to discuss the youngster's progress; before the end of their practicum, they prepare a written report on each client for the Youth Services Program. Finally, the University of Florida requires that practicum students meet with faculty supervisors each week, both individually and in groups.

In consultation with the CREST team leaders, the probation officers decide which youngsters will be referred to the program, carefully weighing their needs and the likelihood that they will respond to counseling. The CREST workers are taught to be part of a "dual treatment" approach to delinquency. Controlling the behavior of young offenders is the responsibility of probation officers, while CREST counselors assume the responsibility of helping these youngsters understand and work through their psychological, family and school problems.

The degree of coordination between probation officers and CREST counselors that is required to make the dual treatment approach successful is well illustrated by a case described by team leader Paul Guttman:

> I started working with Billy about two years ago after he had been with another CREST counselor. He had a lot of trouble adjusting to me because he was used to the other counselor, and it meant putting his trust in someone else. The first few weeks I tried to develop a relationship with him. We used to go to the lake and feed the ducks and talk about whatever he wanted to talk about. At first it was very superficial because he didn't know if he could trust me, but slowly he started talking more and more about his personal feelings, about his conflicts with his mother, about jobs and his aspirations for the future, his frustration about school and why he skipped school--it wasn't important to him. He couldn't wait until he was 16 and could drop out of school. He was failing in school and when he didn't do well, he blamed the teacher or his friends. He wasn't taking any responsibility. We talked about his failures and how much they hurt him and what he would have to do to change.
>
> About that same time, I set up a tutoring program at the junior high school Billy attended. I started to see a correlation between acting out, getting in trouble, and not getting along in school, so I thought that if I worked with him in an academic setting I could help him do better in school and, by doing that, help him feel better about school and about himself.
>
> Tutoring helped him experience some success in math, but he still had trouble staying in school. So I made a contract with him that if he would come to school and stay all day, then some of the time in our tutoring session could be used for whatever he wanted to do. The first time he left after the third period. He said he didn't get along with the fourth and fifth period teachers. I went with him to meet with the teachers. They were willing to help him, but they both thought he wasn't trying, that he was disruptive, that he talked back to them. I tried to help him find alternatives to telling the teacher to shut up or walking out. Maybe he could talk to her after class or ask for some extra help.

CREST counselors meet with clients wherever the youngsters feel comfortable.

He started to show some improvement, but not as much as I had hoped for. This fall, he was sent to a Stop Camp, which is a place for kids on probation to give them a chance to get out of whatever situation may be bothering them. I still saw him once a week, even though the camp was 100 miles away, and I was able to see him in a different, less stressful environment. He was more in control. At the camp, kids get points for doing work or going to classes, and they have to get 750 points to get out. He got a taste of being away from home and realized home wasn't that bad. He began to see that, if he didn't change his ways, his next step could be a training school, and that had a big impact on him. He really appreciated my coming and would cry when I left.

He made his 750 points in about three weeks, and I went down to bring him home. During the two and a half hour ride back, he told me that he had finally figured me out, that I was really trying to help him, and that he wanted to go into psychology so he could help people.

I felt really bad about his having to go to the camp, and so did his probation officer, but I think it was good. He wouldn't have changed nearly as fast without it. We have a lot closer relationship since he's come back. He's getting off probation next month, he's going to school every day, he's making Bs and Cs instead of failing. The perseverance of people who care about him--myself, his probation officer, his teachers, his guidance counselors--really matters to him.

Operating with a remarkably low annual budget of $55,000, Project CREST has become an integral part of the juvenile justice system in North Central Florida. Enthusiasm for the program is high among YSP probation officers, former clients, the university faculty, community leaders, and the CREST counselors themselves. Nevertheless, the project staff has not taken for granted the effectiveness of its counseling program. Several evaluation efforts have been undertaken, focusing on measures of both recidivism and school performance. The results of these investigations have been published in several professional journals.

Troubled youth in many communities could benefit from a program such as CREST. Successful replication of Project CREST in these other communities can occur only if certain conditions can be met:

- A university that offers a graduate counseling program must be within easy driving distance of the community to be served. Untrained volunteers, however well intentioned and dedicated, cannot provide the level of service Project CREST offers. Student volunteers not only have received

training in counseling techniques, but they also are held accountable for their performance as a CREST counselor by their faculty supervisor.

- The support of the community's juvenile authorities is essential. These authorities must be sold on the dual treatment approach, which emphasizes the complementary roles of probation officers and CREST counselors. They must believe that they can work with the counselors as a team and not in competition. Maintaining this support requires a conscientious effort to keep channels of communication open.

- The involvement of community leaders with Project CREST is another key element to its success. These leaders can make the CREST staff more aware of how it can better serve the community, and they can help develop other community resources that can work with CREST in aiding troubled youngsters.

Perhaps the most important factor in building a professional and effective volunteer counseling program is the people who are involved. Strong leadership is needed to get the program started, to pursue funding, and to attract dedicated and talented volunteers. The project staff must be willing to reach out to troubled youth and their families--to go where they are, to work with them in a patient and caring way, and to keep going back again and again as long as a youngster needs help.

1.3 Guide to the Manual

This manual is designed to assist universities and other interested agencies or individuals in developing a CREST-type project to serve delinquent youth in their communities. The manual addresses those issues faced by Project CREST and likely to be faced by others in planning and implementing a similar program. The material presented here comes from program records and extensive interviews with the CREST staff, probation officers and other state officials, the University of Florida faculty, advisory board members, clients and parents.

Chapter 2 outlines the history of Project CREST, including a discussion of the efforts made to gain the cooperation of Youth Services Program authorities and the University of Florida's Department of Counselor Education; the project director's success in securing LEAA funding; and, finally, the impact of community support on CREST's efforts to gain state funding. The effects of recent changes in Florida's juvenile statutes on CREST's program are also discussed.

Chapter 3 describes CREST's organization and operations. Included in this discussion are the steps Project CREST takes to recruit and train its staff; the administrative and clinical supervision given these volunteers; the project's working relationship with the Florida Youth Services Program; CREST's treatment philosophy and its methods of service delivery; and, finally, the role of the citizen advisory boards.

Chapter 4 discusses the evaluation studies that have been done by the Project CREST staff to test the effectiveness of their program in reducing the misconduct of its clients. This chapter also provides a detailed look at the project's budget and the cost of its services. Finally, guidelines for designing evaluations of similar programs are offered.

Chapter 5 reviews the steps that must be taken in planning and implementing a CREST program in other communities.

A client and his counselor get together informally at CREST headquarters.

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CHAPTER 2
HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The Beginnings of Project CREST

In 1970, with no statewide juvenile justice system, Florida's delinquency cases were handled by the state's county judges. In reviewing this arrangement, the LEAA Regional Planning Unit (RPU) in Gainesville noted that professional assistance was needed to counsel delinquent youth, especially those youngsters who presented severe psychological problems. To meet this need, the RPU hired a doctoral student at the University of Florida to design a program that would involve counselor education graduate students in planning and delivering comprehensive psychological services to youngsters coming before the courts.

Before that concept could be fully developed, however, the Florida legislature established in 1971 the Division of Youth Services (DYS), a statewide juvenile justice system. Under this system, circuit judges, rather than county judges, became responsible for adjudication of juvenile cases, and DYS probation officers were given primary authority over adjudicated youth. With this changeover, juveniles no longer went directly to court when delinquency complaints were filed against them. Instead, their cases were screened by DYS personnel to determine what action should be taken. These intake workers were able to choose from a broad array of options, both within and outside the formal judicial system.

In the face of this new system, the Regional Planning Unit was prepared to abandon the still embryonic proposal to involve counselor education students in counseling adjudicated delinquents. However, a judge in Columbia County publicly urged that the idea be reworked to fit into the new DYS system. Probation officers, the judge believed, would soon find themselves overwhelmed with burgeoning caseloads and excessive paperwork, leaving them little time to provide the intensive counseling many clients would need. He also pointed out that most probation officers have no professional training as counselors, and the authoritative role they play could prevent their clients from talking freely about their problems. The judge argued that

these probation officers would need the same help in counseling young delinquents that the county judges had needed under the old system.

A newspaper account of the Columbia County judge's views caught the attention of Dr. Robert Lee, then an assistant professor at the University of Florida. In addition to his professional responsibilities at the university, Dr. Lee had considerable experience working with young people in trouble. He contacted the judge to express his interest in working on the problem and was referred to the director of the Regional Planning Unit. The RPU director agreed to meet with Dr. Lee and invited the chairman of the university's Department of Counselor Education and the regional director of the Division of Youth Services to attend.

Dr. Lee proposed at this meeting that graduate level counseling students be used to provide a support system for helping DYS deal with youngsters requiring intensive therapy, repeat offenders who were adjudicated delinquent and placed on probation and who were likely to be committed to a state training school were further complaints filed against them. Dr. Lee was asked to design a program to reach these youngsters that could operate within the new state system.

Dr. Lee's original intent was to seek LEAA funding for the project through the University of Florida. Since the Department of Counselor Education was to be the primary source for counselors and would be responsible for their professional training and supervision, the university seemed to be the most logical administrative and operational base for the program. When it was learned that LEAA awards block grants only to units of government, an alternative funding strategy had to be developed.

For three reasons, it was decided that Columbia County, one of the counties in the project's proposed service area, should submit the funding proposal to LEAA. First, the judge who had so strongly advocated the counseling program was located in that county, and he indicated a willingness to work with county officials to obtain the required matching funds. Second, Dr. Lee lived at that time in Columbia County, and his volunteer work with young offenders in that county was widely recognized and respected. Finally, Columbia County had received many fewer federal grants than nearby Alachua County, where the University of Florida is located.

2.2 Winning Federal Support

Dr. Lee's proposal, which called for the use of paid graduate counseling students to provide services, was submitted by Columbia County and subsequently approved, with some modifications, by LEAA's State Planning Agency in

1971. Under this proposal, the project workers were to become employees of Columbia County, even though the project was to operate in other counties as well and the central office was to be located in Alachua County.

Because of insufficient matching funds from the county, LEAA's funding for the program was delayed for several months, which necessitated a change in the proposal that profoundly altered the nature of the program. It was at this point that the use of volunteer counselors became an essential component of Project CREST.

The university's Department of Counselor Education already had at that time a functioning practicum program in which graduate students were required to work as volunteer counselors in a variety of community agencies. In fact, extensive field work is a requirement mandated by the American Personnel and Guidance Association and is a central feature of graduate counseling programs across the country. Among the practicum sites operating in 1971 at the University, however, there was not a suitable placement for students wishing to gain experience in counseling delinquent youngsters.

After identifying this need, Dr. Lee approached the chairman of the Department of Counselor Education, the practicum coordinator and other faculty members about accrediting his proposed program as a practicum site. Given their approval, he proposed to LEAA that the time to be spent by the volunteer graduate students and their faculty supervisors be thought of as an "in-kind" match to LEAA's funds. LEAA approved this change, and Project CREST was funded.

2.3 Planning and Start-Up

An initial start-up grant of $12,000 was received in June, 1972, followed by an operating grant of $49,000 for the period of October, 1972 to June, 1973. Dr. Lee resigned his position at the university to become full-time project director. He recruited the project staff, then composed of a full-time secretary, three half-time paid graduate students and six volunteer graduate students. The staff spent its first summer planning the program, visiting the counties they were to serve, meeting with probation officers and their supervisors, and visiting training schools and group homes. In conjunction with Division of Youth Services personnel, the CREST staff ironed out the details of the referral procedure and developed the necessary forms for thorough record-keeping. In addition, an integrated supervisory system--involving weekly contact for all counselors with the senior CREST staff, faculty advisors and DYS probation officers--was formulated, along with the basic orientation program for new volunteers.

With these preparations made, Project CREST received its first clients in October, 1972. During the first year of operation, CREST provided extended counseling to 50 clients in four counties, including Columbia and Alachua counties, which it still serves. Over the next two years, as LEAA funding increased, service was expanded into other locations, including Putnam County, the third county in the project's current service area. LEAA funding reached a peak of approximately $75,000 in 1974 when CREST counseled about 200 clients.

2.4 Building a Relationship with Youth Services

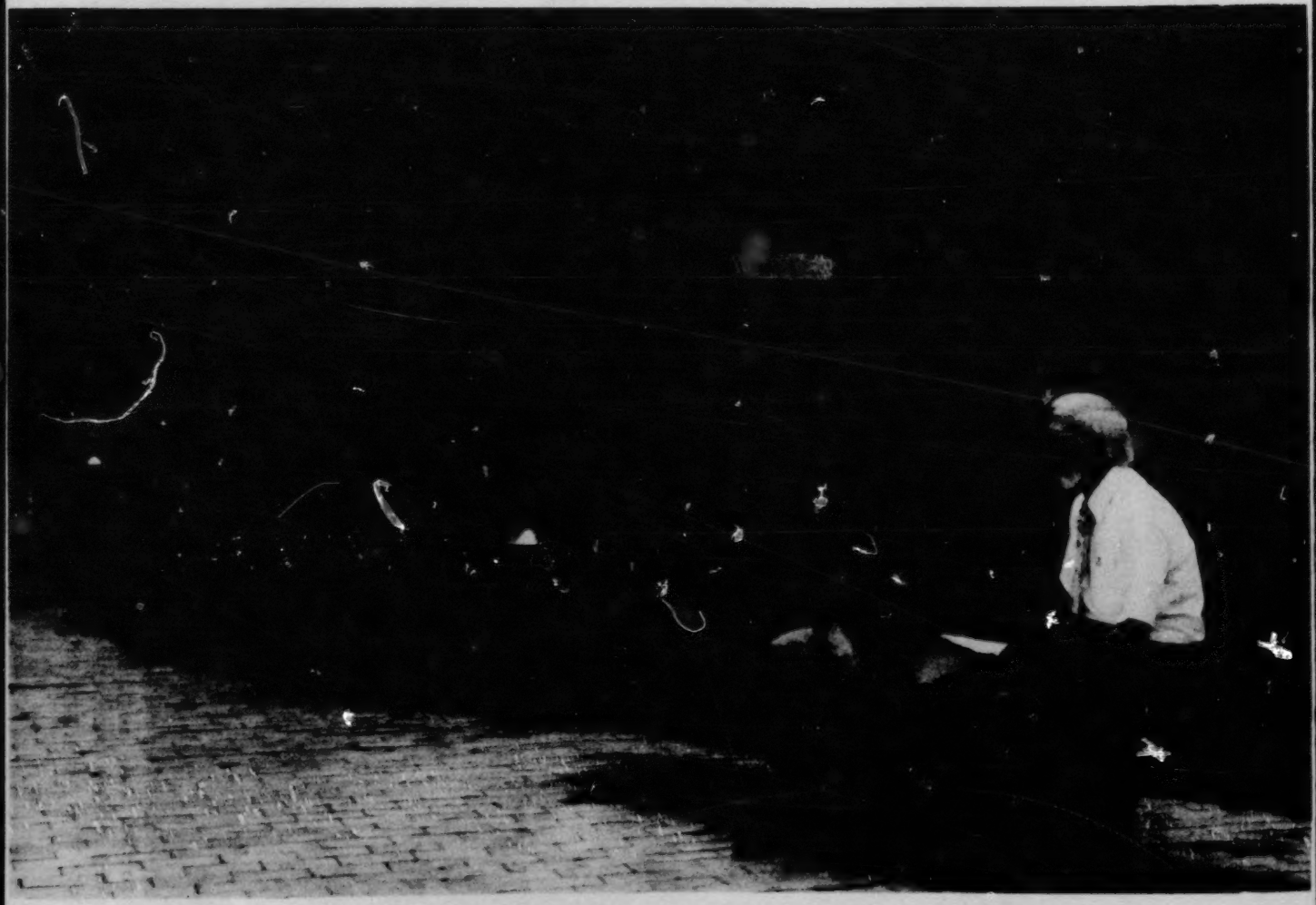
With the "dual treatment" concept being the cornerstone of CREST's counseling program, the staff worked hard during its early years to build a solid working relationship with Division of Youth Services personnel. As noted earlier, probation officers and their supervisors were brought into the planning process early and were regularly consulted as the project got underway. From the outset, the probation officers were receptive to the professional assistance that CREST could provide them and their clients. Because CREST workers saw themselves as supporting the work of probation officers, they posed no threat to the officers' authority and were warmly welcomed.

The details of this vital relationship will be outlined in Chapter 3. It is important to note here in reviewing the history of the project that the early effort expended by the CREST staff to promote a spirit of cooperation and open communication with juvenile authorities has been a key to Project CREST's success.

2.5 University Involvement

It was important for CREST to solidify its relationship with DYS personnel in those early months. But it is clear, too, that the project could not have blossomed without the enthusiastic support and encouragement of the faculty of the University of Florida's Department of Counselor Education, where the project's volunteer counselors are professionally trained and supervised. Without that resource, CREST simply could not function.

The chairman of the Department of Counselor Education, as noted previously, had met in 1971 with Dr. Lee, the director of LEAA's Regional Planning Unit, and the regional director of the Division of Youth Services to discuss the Gainesville area's need for counseling services for delinquent youth. Throughout the development of the project, Dr. Lee met frequently with individual faculty members and attended faculty meetings to explain the



CREST's project director maintains close ties with university faculty members and administration.

program and to get the advice of his colleagues on issues such as staff training, supervision, and various treatment approaches. Although Dr. Lee left his full-time position with the university to direct Project CREST, his ties to the Department of Counselor Education have remained strong; he is currently an adjunct professor there.

Since there was no other community agency in the area serving the kinds of youngsters helped by Project CREST, faculty members welcomed the project as an important addition to the department's practicum program. Dr. Joseph Wittmer, present chairman of the Department of Counselor Education, sees the department's relationship with CREST as mutually beneficial:

> "Project CREST benefits a lot from our students, and there's no doubt in my mind that we benefit a lot from having CREST available to us as a practicum/internship site. We've had students in our program who have based their doctoral dissertations on their work with CREST, and others have gone on to do additional research in the juvenile justice area because of their experience there. I don't know whether CREST would have to close down without our people, but without CREST, we would certainly have a void in what we call our community agency track, which includes correctional counseling. It's been a perfect place for our students to get practical experience working with young offenders."

2.6 The Move to State Funding

In developing its plan for LEAA funds for fiscal year 1975, the local Regional Planning Unit eliminated CREST from the budget in order to meet other critical needs in the Gainesville area. Having anticipated the eventual loss of this support, the project staff had earlier begun efforts to have CREST included in the budget for the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS). Under a reorganization statute implemented in 1976, HRS was established as an umbrella agency and included the old Division of Youth Services, now called the Youth Services Program (YSP).

By this time, CREST had built a strong and active constituency, including probation officers and other juvenile authorities, the university, the public schools, community leaders, and parents. Many of these people wrote letters to state officials to urge that CREST be included in the state budget. This support derived not only from the success of Project CREST's counseling program, but also from the conscientious efforts of the staff to involve the community in helping delinquent youngsters. In addition, Dr. Lee had regularly informed area legislators of CREST's operations and accomplishments and had spoken often before various civic and professional organizations. These contacts, too, proved to be invaluable.

LEAA funding, including several residual grants that the project had been able to obtain, was exhausted in August, 1975. As funding decreased, services had to be cut back drastically, and at one point, Project CREST was virtually out of business. The State Planning Agency, with the support of LEAA's regional office in Atlanta, awarded additional LEAA funds to CREST until state money could become available. With continued strong support from the communities it had served, CREST stepped up its efforts to obtain state funding. Working initially with local legislators who knew the project well and then going door-to-door in the state capital in Tallahassee, Dr. Lee was able to persuade both houses of the Florida legislature to approve funding for CREST to begin July 1, 1976.

CREST has been supported entirely by state funds since that time. The mechanism by which Project CREST receives its funding is known as a "purchase-of-service" contract. By purchasing services from private vendors instead of providing them directly themselves, state agencies are afforded greater flexibility in their efforts to meet community needs. Importantly, the quality of service provided by these vendors is reviewed each year before contracts are renewed.

CREST's financial crisis was important because of both its eventual outcome and what it revealed about the project itself. The transition from uncertain federal funding to more stable state support was made possible, in large measure, by the strength of CREST's constituency. This strong support not only speaks well of the services provided by CREST, but also of the dedication and steadfast advocacy of its director.

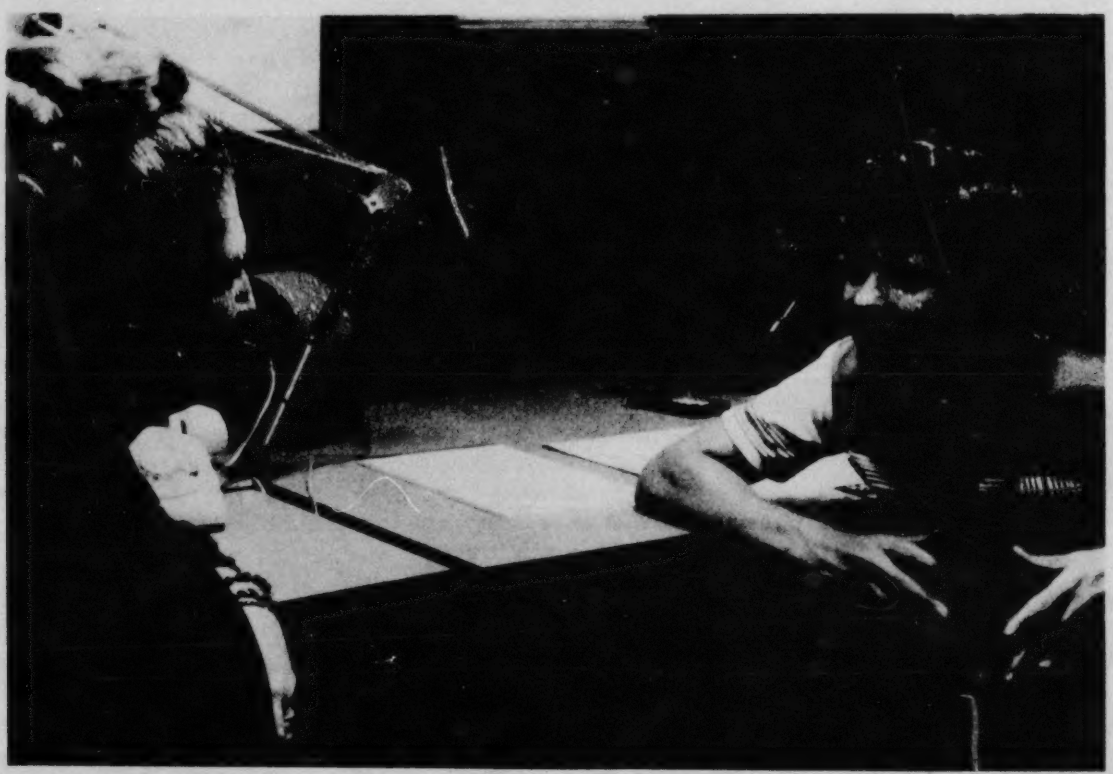
2.7 Impact of Changes in Florida's Juvenile Statutes

Since the inauguration in 1971 of Florida's statewide juvenile justice system, two additional changes in the juvenile statutes have been enacted. First, as noted before, the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services was established in 1976 and given jurisdiction over the Division of Youth Services, now called the Youth Services Program. It turns out that this restructuring of the state bureaucracy has had little effect on CREST's working relationship with probation officers.

A more fundamental change resulted in 1978 with the institution of a policy of so-called "community control." Prior to this change, the stated policy of Florida's juvenile authorities was to focus on the emotional and psychological needs of delinquent youth and to resort to punishment only after other measures had failed. Passage of the 1978 statute saw the emphasis shift toward the need to control juvenile misconduct and thereby protect the community.

Under this new system, the probation plan developed for each adjudicated youth must include some kind of punitive action. This plan, which must be approved by the court, typically includes a specified number of hours of public service work or victim restitution and may also involve the imposition of curfews, suspension of the youngster's drivers license, or other restrictions on his or her activities. The plan is designed to make youthful offenders understand that they must accept responsibility for their behavior and to protect the community from further victimization. The probation officers administer these controls, regularly monitoring their clients' behavior and invoking sanctions if they fail to abide by the conditions of their probation.

This new system places an additional burden on probation officers, giving them even less time to address the emotional needs of their clients and making it less likely that these youngsters will confide in them. This has made YSP's partnership with CREST even more crucial. Recognizing the increased need for a dual treatment approach, many Florida judges now routinely order that adjudicated delinquents be given some kind of counseling. It is clear that Project CREST will continue to be an integral part of the Gainesville area's juvenile justice system.

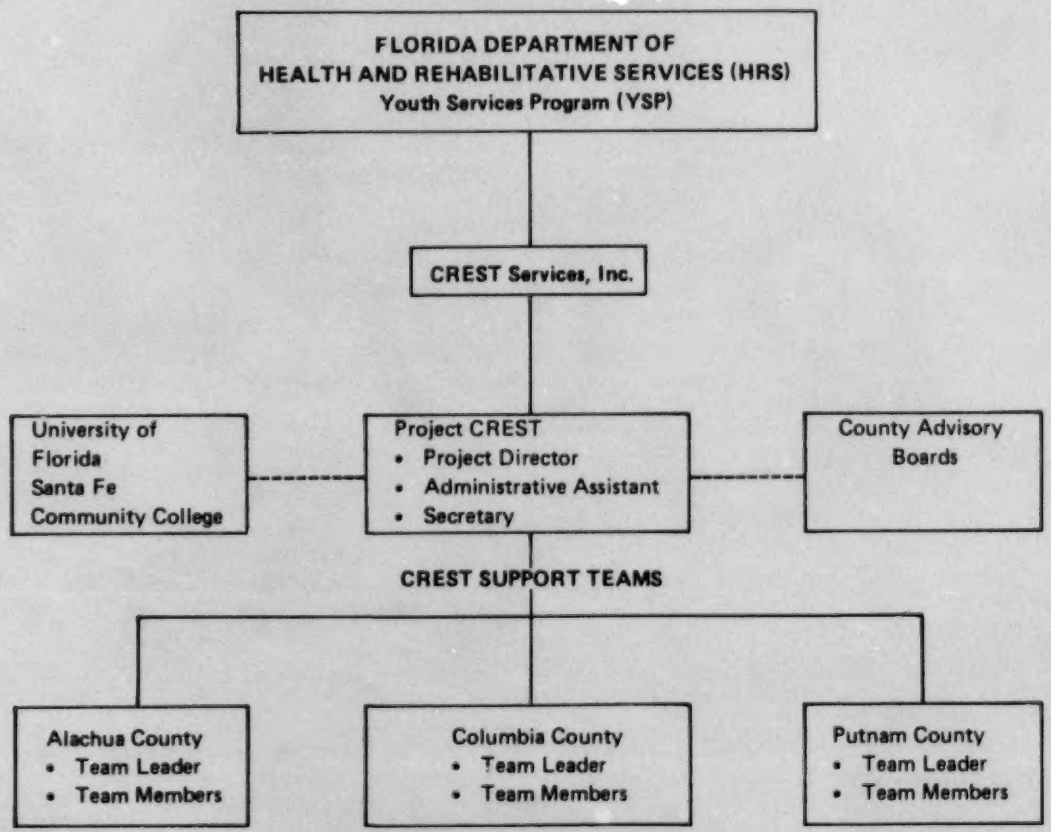


Counselors encourage clients to talk about their interests and feelings.

CHAPTER 3
ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Since Project CREST began receiving state funding in 1976, it has operated through a private, non-profit corporation called CREST Services, Inc., a legal entity capable of entering contracts with the State of Florida. Aside from this addition, the present organization of the project, illustrated in Figure 3.1, is nearly identical to the original structure. A small

Figure 3.1
PROJECT CREST ORGANIZATION



office in Gainesville serves as the project's headquarters, and the project director continues to be the only full-time paid employee. In addition to a part-time secretary, the central office staff includes an administrative assistant who shares responsibility with the director for day-to-day operation of the office and provides administrative support to the three team leaders.

3.1 Volunteer Recruitment

> It's hard for me to think of any negative experiences I've ever had with CREST. All the workers have been good and some have been just outstanding. We've been dealing with volunteers, both CREST and non-CREST for a long time, and the quality of volunteer that you get just means so much. I don't know how CREST goes about recruiting their volunteers, but whatever system they have, it's a darn good one.
>
> Dave Heathley
> YSP Probation Officer

Fifteen to 20 volunteers work at Project CREST at any one time, serving between 150 and 200 clients each year. In CREST's seven-year history, 262 volunteers have counseled approximately 1000 youngsters. CREST has always been successful in attracting and retaining sufficient numbers of trained volunteers. The director's recruitment efforts, together with the reputation CREST has established among the University of Florida faculty, has resulted in a continuous flow of students seeking placement with the project.

Project CREST's volunteer counselors and team leaders are enrolled in the graduate program of the university's Department of Counselor Education. These students are working toward either a graduate specialist degree, which is awarded after two years of study, or a doctorate. They must complete at least two academic quarters of advanced coursework before starting their first counseling practicum; Figure 3.2 lists the courses required of the students during those two quarters. Candidates for the specialist degree are required to complete three practica; doctoral students must complete five. Each practicum lasts one quarter, or approximately ten weeks; in return for five hours of academic credit, the students must devote 12 to 15 hours per week to their counseling work. Another two or three hours each week is spent in group and individual meetings with faculty supervisors. In addition to this practicum, the students continue to take courses at the university.

Near the end of their studies, both specialist and doctoral students must complete an internship in a community agency. The work that the students do for this internship is often similar to what they do for the practica.

Figure 3.2

COURSES REQUIRED OF COUNSELOR EDUCATION GRADUATE STUDENTS BEFORE FIRST PRACTICUM

Course[1]	Quarter Hours
The Helping Relationship	
Principles of Guidance	4
Counseling Theories	5
Laboratory in Counseling	1
Group Procedures in Guidance and Personnel Work	4
Sensitivity Exploration Laboratory	1
Vocational-Educational Development and Appraisal[2]	
Vocational Development	4
Personnel Testing	4

Source: Department of Counselor Education, University of Florida at Gainesville.

[1] Two quarters of coursework must be taken before the first practicum. Since electives are permitted, it is impossible to know all of the courses students might take before the practicum.

[2] Courses usually, but not always taken before the first practicum experience.

But interns work at their site full-time, and they must receive special permission to enroll in more than one course at the university when doing the internship. Specialist students must work as interns for one quarter, whereas doctoral students must put in an entire year. Such requirements are typical across the more than 500 graduate counseling programs in the United States.

CREST is one of several opportunities available to students for fulfilling their practica and internship requirements. Other options include community mental health centers, drug rehabilitation programs, and crisis intervention projects. However, CREST is the only agency in the Gainesville area that actively recruits volunteers. At the beginning of each academic year, the project director visits classes in basic counseling theory for the new graduate students and describes the work being done by the project. CREST also sponsors open houses for new students at their central office. Those students choosing to work with CREST typically do so for two quarters, or approximately six months. Faculty advisors generally recommend that students do no more than two practica with any one organization in order to broaden their learning experiences.

In addition to graduate student counselors, CREST uses undergraduate students from Santa Fe Community College, also located in Gainesville, as counselor aides. Students enrolled in the college's two-year human services curriculum are required to do field work with a human services agency. One such agency that they can choose is CREST. Because some of these undergraduates are not required to complete basic coursework in counseling before beginning their field work, CREST uses them initially as academic tutors or in "big brother" or "sister" roles, thus giving the clients someone near their own age with whom they can talk. The project has developed an in-house training program for counselor aides in which experienced CREST personnel teach specific methods for reaching clients and explain how the role of counselor aide differs from that of the graduate student counselors with whom the aides work. Only after they have had experience and received further CREST training will these aides move into counseling; even then, they are not assigned the more difficult cases and are closely supervised by more experienced counselors and the team leaders.

Screening of volunteers is minimal; all applicants are interviewed by the project director, and few are rejected. But YSP officials in CREST's service area have universally expressed high regard for the quality of the project's volunteers. The fact that the counselors are pursuing a graduate degree in counselor education is accepted as an indication of their commitment. And since work with a community agency is a requirement for which the students receive course credit, a degree of accountability is built in that would not be present if the volunteers came from the community at large.

CREST staff members meet frequently with the project director.

3.2 Administrative Supervision

> Team meetings and staff meetings really help counselors deal with the frustration level. I really feel that without Nancy's [the team leader's] support when I was a practicum student, I never would have made it this far. To me there was a turning point, to go with CREST or to go with another agency, and I have never been so satisfied with a decision.
>
> Kathleen May
> CREST Team Leader

Structured supervision and ongoing training of volunteer counselors and counselor aides have contributed strongly to CREST's success in helping delinquent youngsters. From the time these volunteers first arrive until they complete their field work, they are part of a closely knit and mutually supportive counseling staff. Formal contacts between the counselors and the senior staff, including both training classes and weekly meetings, are an institutionalized part of the project (see Figure 3.3). Equally important, however, is the willingness of the CREST staff to discuss at anytime what needs to be done for a particular youngster and to encourage the counselors to persevere.

Before new counselors are assigned any clients, they must first participate in an intensive twelve-hour workshop on juvenile delinquency and the clinical stance taken by Project CREST. A wide range of subjects are covered at the workshop: the role of the counselor in delinquency work; special techniques for dealing with youth who are difficult to reach; research on the causes and consequences of delinquency; the nature of the Florida juvenile justice system. A complete list of topics appears in Figure 3.4. This type of training continues during the 10-week tenure of the practicum through weekly staff meetings at CREST headquarters. A paid staff member, the project director or a team leader, is assigned in advance of each meeting to prepare a presentation focused on a completed case study or a specific counseling issue. Each presentation is followed by a group discussion. An effort is made at the beginning of each quarter to determine what issues the volunteers would like to see covered during these meetings.

As was shown in Figure 3.1, the volunteers are divided into counseling teams, one for each of the counties served by CREST. Each team, consisting of four to six volunteer counselors and aides, is headed by an advanced graduate student who has worked previously as a counselor with the project. These team leaders work half-time and receive an annual salary of about $6400, an amount comparable to that received by a graduate assistant at the University of Florida. The teams each meet at least once a week to discuss the progress of individual clients, alternative treatment techniques, or any problems that might have arisen with the Youth Services Program staff. These

Figure 3.3

SUPERVISION OF CREST COUNSELORS

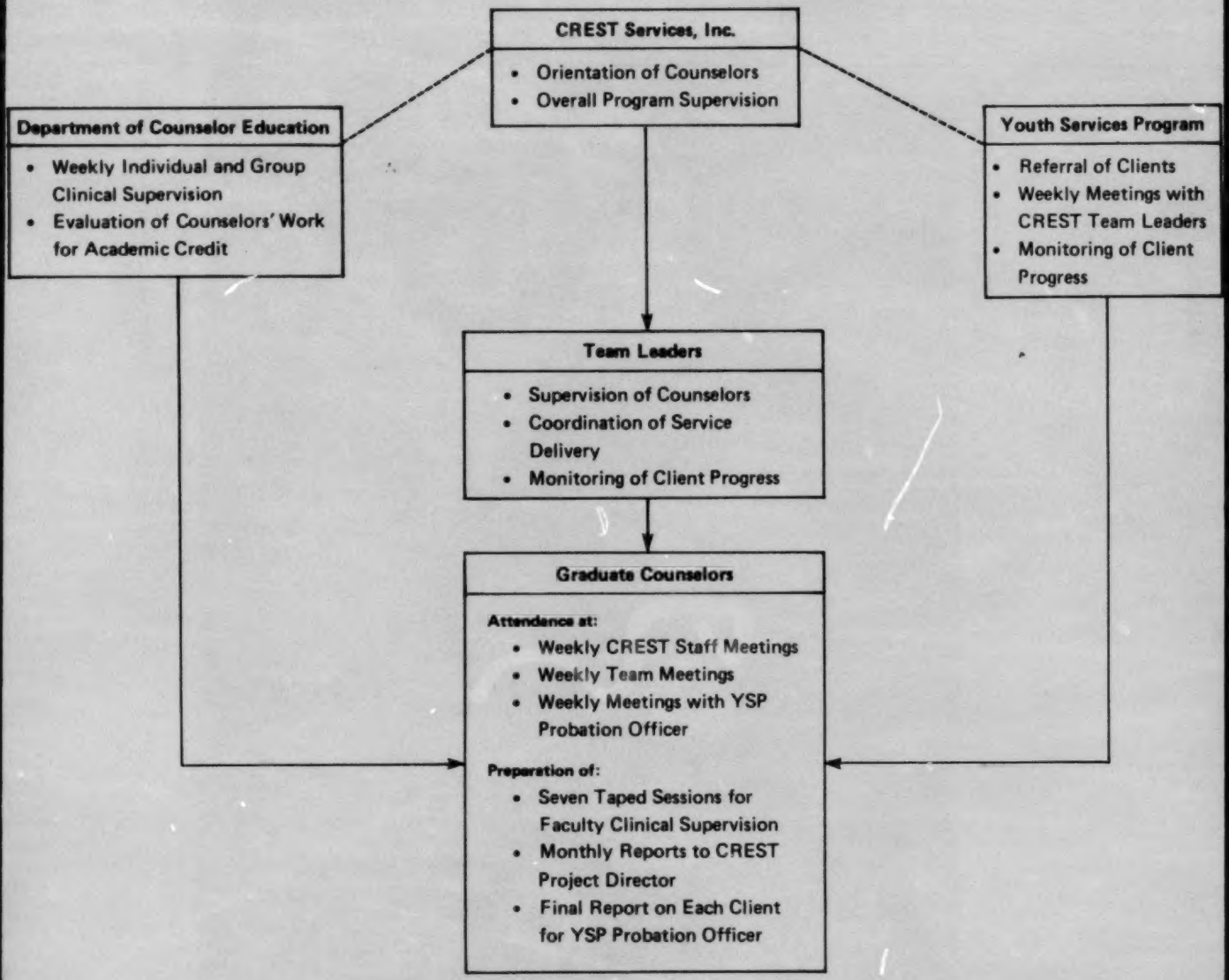

CREST Services, Inc.
• Orientation of Counselors
• Overall Program Supervision
Department of Counselor Education
• Weekly Individual and Group Clinical Supervision
• Evaluation of Counselors' Work for Academic Credit
Youth Services Program
• Referral of Clients
• Weekly Meetings with CREST Team Leaders
• Monitoring of Client Progress
Team Leaders
• Supervision of Counselors
• Coordination of Service Delivery
• Monitoring of Client Progress
Graduate Counselors
Attendance at:
• Weekly CREST Staff Meetings
• Weekly Team Meetings
• Weekly Meetings with YSP Probation Officer
Preparation of:
• Seven Taped Sessions for Faculty Clinical Supervision
• Monthly Reports to CREST Project Director
• Final Report on Each Client for YSP Probation Officer

Figure 3.4
PROJECT CREST IN-SERVICE TRAINING TOPICS

Orientation Requirement	Offered As Needed	For Counselors	For Counselor Aides	TOPICS
				Delinquency, Kids, and CREST
X		X	X	Delinquency facts and fantasy: What the research literature shows
X		X	X	Adolescent growth and development a. Normal development b. Unmet needs of delinquent youth
X		X	X	Overview of Florida's juvenile justice system
X		X	X	The "dual-treatment" approach: Community control and professional counseling
X		X	X	Case management and information processing
X		X	X	Issues on confidentiality of information
	X	X		Project CREST research in perspective
	X	X	X	History of CREST funding
				Counselor Tools and Counselor Growth
X		X	X	Counselor self-exploration: Myself as a community worker
X		X	X	Counselor self-exploration: Myself as a child/adolescent
X			X	Personal communication: One- and two-way communication; attending, active listening, responding
X		X	X	Ways of reaching the resistant or reluctant client
X		X	X	Connecting with families
X		X	X	Connecting with other professionals
X		X		Basics of crisis intervention
	X	X		Moral development: Cognitive and affective
	X	X		Techniques of values clarificaton
	X	X		Methods of tutoring
	X	X		Decision-making process
	X	X	X	Substance abuse: Symptoms and counseling approaches
	X	X	X	Ethical and role dilemmas: CREST casebook studies
	X	X		Career exploration: Group techniques
	X	X		Uses and abuses of psychological testing

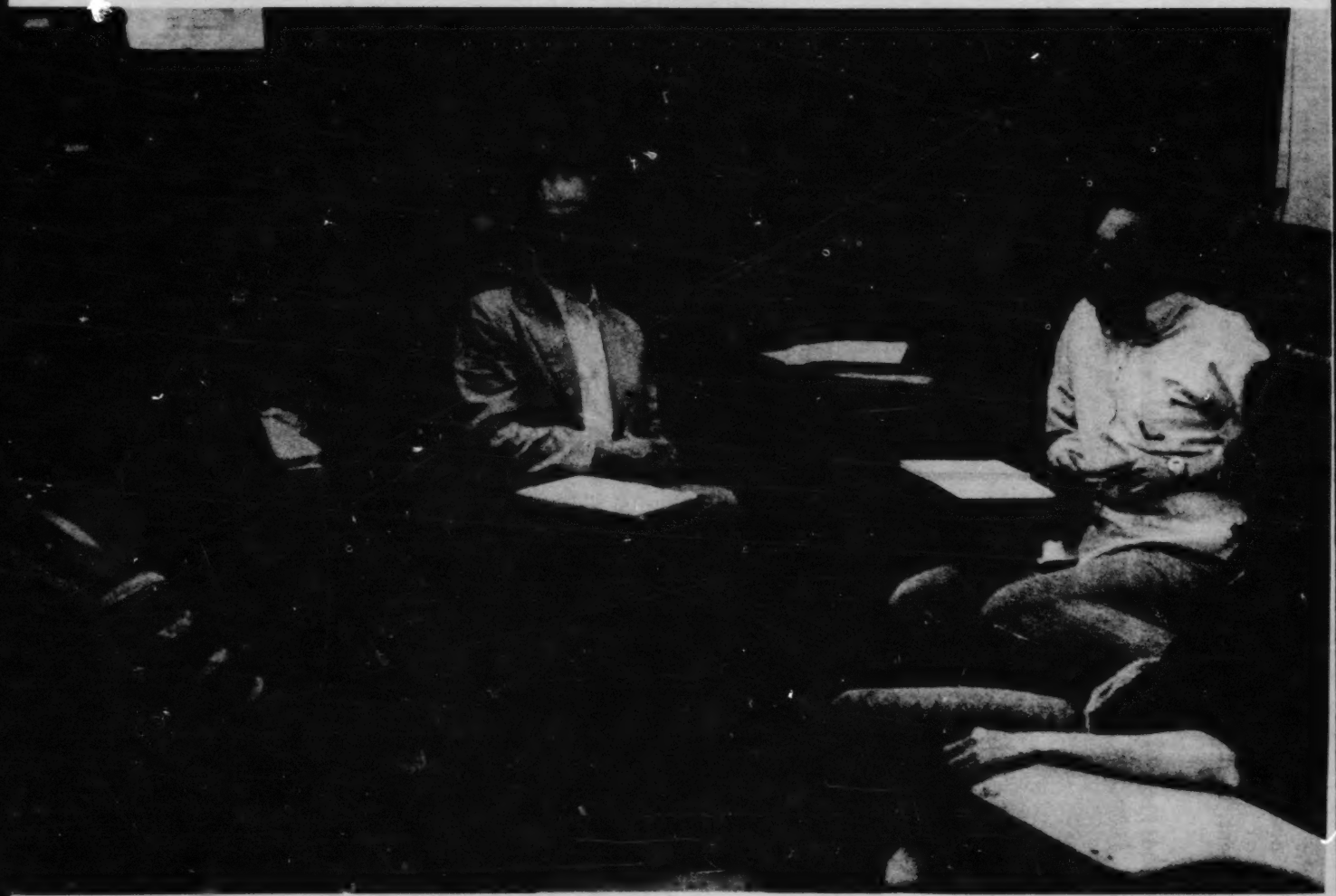
weekly meetings guarantee a minimal level of contact between the team members; informal discussions between them occur with much greater frequency, either at CREST's central office or while traveling to the communities served by the project. The leaders are the key to making this team approach work. They are able to provide less experienced counselors with first-hand knowledge of effective treatment approaches and to help them get past the frustrations that go with the difficult task of counseling delinquent youngsters.

In addition to his administrative responsibilities, the project director is also involved in the supervision of the CREST volunteers. Volunteer counselors see the director both at staff meetings and informally. The director is always available for meetings by appointment. In addition, volunteers, as well as the team leaders, must submit monthly reports of their counseling activities to the director. In the Appendix can be found the forms used by the CREST counselors to record their activities and client progress.

3.3 Clinical Supervision

Primary responsibility for clinical supervision of the graduate students participating in practica rests with faculty members in the Department of Counselor Education. The department requires practicum students to meet with their faculty advisors, individually and as part of a small group, for two and a half hours per week (see Figure 3.3). In the individual sessions, which last an hour, the advisor reviews tape recordings of counseling sessions that the student has made. Seven such recordings must be submitted during the 10-week practicum. Tapes are made only when youngsters have given their oral consent; the recordings are used strictly for the purpose of these sessions with the faculty advisor. Based on an analysis of the recordings and discussions with the student, the advisor may suggest alternative counseling approaches or identify additional needs that the client might have.

In addition, each practicum student is assigned to a group that meets with a faculty member other than the one supervising the student individually. The format of these weekly sessions, which last one and a half hours, depends to a large extent on the faculty member leading the group. Some supervisors prefer to structure the sessions around general issues, such as confidentiality, that are important in the work of counselors. Others encourage the students to bring up problems they have with their cases or the service agency for which they work. Department policy on the composition of these groups has varied. In the past, the groups were heterogeneous, including students working in a wide range of settings. More recently the groups have been made up of students involved with a particular type of counseling (e.g., school guidance counseling; family counseling, etc.). This change has made the discussion more focused and has increased the potential for students learning from the experiences of fellow group members.



Practicum students meet with faculty supervisors weekly.

3.4 Relationship of CREST to YSP

Because Project CREST is an adjunct to the Florida Youth Services Program, it relies on the support and cooperation of probation officers and other YSP personnel. As noted in Chapter 2, state juvenile authorities played an important role in the early planning and implementation of Project CREST. This cooperative relationship between CREST and YSP has continued to the present time. A conscientious effort by the CREST staff to maintain open communication with probation officers has created a full partnership between the two groups, a partnership grounded in a set of common goals. According to one of the CREST team leaders, the central factor in building this type of relationship with juvenile authorities is "not to have the idea that your method is superior. CREST has something to offer, and probation has something to offer; and the child needs both. Even though our methods are different, the common goal is to help a child overcome his problems with the law."

From the beginning, probation officers have viewed CREST services as an important supplement to their own work. Even though these officers have caseloads that fall within national standards (40 to 60 clients), they have insufficient time to provide the intensive counseling or therapy that some clients need. This difficulty was made more pressing by the 1978 changes in Florida statutes that require probation officers to concentrate on monitoring their clients' compliance with court-ordered sanctions. This change has made the dual treatment approach an even more important part of the YSP's efforts to deal with juvenile delinquency, as explained by Jim Arnold, a non-residential program specialist with Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services:

> By the time a kid ends up on court-ordered supervision, he's had the benefit of a lot of other efforts to head him off early. We've given him every opportunity to be handled outside the legal system. When we get to this point, we've got a kid who has been around and has a lot of problems. For most of the kids that CREST deals with, their rehabilitative needs are more serious than their delinquency needs. They're lawbreakers, no question about it, but these are kids who don't get along at home, they don't get along at school, they don't get along anywhere. Youth Services just can't provide the intensive counseling and therapy that we need for these kids. We can control them, but we need to get inside the kids' heads at that point and try to change some behavior.

Clearly, not every youngster in the care of YSP needs or can benefit from the kind of counseling CREST provides. It is the responsibility of both the probation officers and the CREST team leaders to make certain that the

youngsters referred to CREST are those who are most likely to be helped by counseling. This can be a difficult judgment to make. Some offenders might respond to probation alone; others may be too set in their ways or actively hostile to counseling. The only practical guide is experience. Probation officers now have a good sense of what CREST can and cannot do and know which youngsters are appropriate referrals. It almost never occurs that a probation officer and a CREST team leader will disagree on a referral.

The referral process is designed to be simple and flexible. When considering a CREST referral, a probation officer will first meet with the CREST team leader who is responsible for the county where the youngster lives. Because the team leaders visit the YSP offices several times each week and frequently attend YSP staff meetings, discussion about a possible referral occurs informally whenever the need arises. The probation officer reviews the youth's record with the team leader, and they decide together if the client's needs and CREST's available resources are compatible. The team leader must strive to maintain the caseload at a manageable and productive level. The official referral form used by YSP appears in Figure 3.5.

If a referral is made, the team leader must decide which counselor would be best for the client, trying to match the client's profile with the interests and skills of the available counselors. Typically, the counselor is introduced to the client by the probation officer at YSP offices so that the youth understands that there is a relationship between YSP and CREST, even though the roles the two will play are quite different. The counselor uses this meeting to see if counseling has a chance of being productive. The decision is typically an affirmative one; in the words of one YSP official, "CREST has never turned down a kid."

Once a youngster has been accepted for CREST counseling, a strong effort is made to coordinate the efforts of the Youth Services Program and Project CREST. First, the counselor meets weekly with the probation officer to discuss the youth's progress and ways of dealing with any problems that have arisen (see Figure 3.5). Second, the counselors are required to submit a report on each client at the end of their practicum, summarizing the course of the therapy, reviewing the treatment goals and whether the client has met them, and offering specific recommendations on what treatment might be tried next.

In summary, the graduate counselors have formal contact every week with each of the three elements of the Project CREST network--the project staff, including both their team leader and the director; the Youth Services Program probation officers in charge of their clients; and the Department of Counselor Education faculty. With the volunteers receiving this kind of support and guidance in their work, their level of commitment remains firm and the quality of counseling they provide is high. Moreover, the involvement of these three groups in supervising the students keeps channels of

Figure 3.5

REFERRAL FORM FOR PROJECT CREST SERVICES
FLORIDA YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM (YSP)

From: Florida Youth Services Program

To: Clinical Regional Support Team (Project CREST)

For: Specialized Support Services

Name_____Sex___Date of Birth_____

Address_____Phone_____

School_____Place of employment_____

Reason for referral:

Assessment and long-term therapy____

Short-term specialized counseling____

Individual academic support____ Subject(s)_____

Other (please specify)_____

(Opinion of YSP referring counselor):

Likelihood of child being committed to a state residence treatment center for delinquents, if current behavioral trends continue:

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
No Chance	Slight Chance	50-50 Chance	Likely	Very Likely

Additional Information:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

YSP Counselor Date YSP District Supervisor Date

communication between them open and helps foster a team approach to dealing with the clients.

3.5 Service Delivery

> I probably average about three CREST workers on my caseload at any one time. I had two last year who ran a group for me and did an outstanding job. Another CREST worker was dealing with a youngster of mine who barely escaped commitment, a severely disturbed young man who needed a great deal of time and attention. She just did a phenomenal job with him. She was able to get an appointment for him to have a neurological exam. She monitored the things he was supposed to do. This youngster needed a lot of extra supervision that she was able to provide. The mother does not provide the kind of close supervision that she should. And that type of support was really necessary for him.
>
> Dave Heathley
> YSP Probation Officer

The objective of CREST counseling is to help delinquent youngsters understand the motives behind their actions and to show them how they can take responsibility for better controlling and planning their behavior. The key to meeting this objective, according to the CREST staff, is building a relationship of trust with the clients. These troubled youngsters do need the structure and discipline imposed by their probation officers. But they also need to have someone they can confide in, a person whom they know deeply cares about them and will help them work through their problems. Clients quickly understand the difference between the roles played by probation officers and their counselors; one youngster described it this way:

> I couldn't tell Brad [his probation officer] a lot of things because he wrote everything down on a piece of paper. But I could just talk to Paul [his CREST counselor] like he was my friend.

3.5.1 Treatment Methods

The approach taken by Project CREST to provide help to its clients has four key components:

A CREST team leader visits the home of a client.

- Outreach. CREST counselors do not wait for their clients to come to them. Instead, they move out into the communities, meeting their clients in the youngsters' homes, at school, in cars, or wherever else they might feel comfortable. The counselors are also willing to seek out youngsters who fail to keep an appointment.

- Treatment Goals. In some cases, treatment goals will be made explicit to the client at the outset; often these goals will emerge only after a few exploratory sessions. In either case, progress against these treatment goals is closely monitored, not only by the counselor, but also by the team leader, faculty advisors and the probation officer. The counselors take special care not to judge harshly those clients who fail to achieve stated goals; instead, the counselors work with the youngsters to help them explore how they feel about that failure and what can be done to bring success.

- An Integrated Approach. The counselors not only work with the clients themselves, but also with the families and the schools. Parents, siblings and teachers can be apprised of what is being done for a youngster and how they can reinforce the treatment effort. While seeing the clients once or twice each week, the counselors will typically meet with the client's family once a week and relevant school personnel approximately every other week.

- Referral. Counselors sometimes discover problems that a youngster has that need special attention, such as a learning disability or a previously undiagnosed health problem. In consultation with the probation officer and perhaps the client's family and school, CREST counselors will arrange for these youngsters to receive the professional help that is required.

The counseling techniques that are used by the CREST counselors can not be described with precision. Quite simply, there is no one CREST method. A number of counseling techniques are taught by the University of Florida's Department of Counselor Education; by the time graduate students begin their field work experiences, they have been exposed to a wide range of therapy methods. Whatever method a CREST counselor chooses to use with a particular client, the counselor is careful to take a non-authoritarian stance and to stay focused on the feelings and attitudes of the client. Being able to zero in on a youngster's needs, devising a treatment strategy, and knowing exactly what to do or say at any particular moment is largely a matter of intuition and experience. The volunteer counselors are greatly aided in this by the perspectives and experience of the probation officers, the faculty, and the senior CREST staff. Forms used by the counselors to record the course of a client's treatment program are included in the Appendix.

In addition to regularly scheduled individual and group counseling sessions, many counselors also spend time with their clients in recreational or leisure time activities. Usually at their own expense, counselors will take their clients to museums, art shows and sporting events. Special attention is given to the youngster's leisure time activities since the gains made through counseling can be eroded by inappropriate use of spare time.

A case history described by Kathleen May, a CREST team leader, illustrates this focus on leisure time activities and the flexibility of treatment method that is encouraged by the project. Counselors will use a variety of approaches to get youngsters talking about their problems at home or at school, their interests and their aspirations. Once a set of core problems is identified, counselors must find a way to make the clients recognize those problems and then actively deal with them:

> Michael was about thirteen years old but looked much younger. He had gotten into trouble for vandalizing a school in Fort Myers, and his mother had shipped him off to live with his father in Gainesville. The father had remarried and his wife had three daughters, two older than Michael and one younger.
>
> When I first met Michael, he was very unhappy in his new school, his grades were poor, and he was not very verbal. He was my first client, and I wasn't sure what to do with him, so in team meetings we talked about how I could get started with him.
>
> Michael and I went to the museum on campus, and he opened up there because he knew more about those little reptiles than I did. So he started talking to me. The next Saturday we spent about four hours out at the Millhopper, which is just a big sinkhole in the ground. After that we had sessions in a park near his home. We did a lot of drawings and some work with puppets, where he acted out his family situation. He would draw a picture of what made him happy: he was swimming and there was just this little body in all this blue. He explained that he felt very free at that time, and it was the same kind of feeling he had when he was flying kites. His sad pictures were crowded situations with his sisters all around. He felt like a little boy surrounded by a lot of women, and he would get very angry at home and punch his sisters. That was behavior his father couldn't accept. So we worked on ways he could get out some of that aggression. We went jogging together; he joined the Boys' Club and got involved in basketball.

Michael and I probably only saw one another for about four or five months. Then I didn't see him at all for about six months and happened to be out in the neighborhood and just stopped by unofficially. He was very happy, hadn't gotten in any more trouble, and had made more friends in the neighborhood.

That was about a year and a half ago when I was doing my practicum. The last time I saw Michael was about six months ago. He was in a new grade in school. He's out of the alternative class he was in, which is designed for troublemakers. His grades are high. He seems very happy.

3.5.2 Management of Treatment Services

Responsibility for client intake, counselor assignment, scheduling and evaluation of services rests primarily with CREST's team leaders, with overall program management and supervision provided by the project director. Balancing the professional interests of student counselors and the therapy needs of CREST's clients requires sensitivity and a high level of management skill.

Since the volunteer counselors who are fulfilling their practicum requirements work with CREST only part-time, their caseloads must be limited in order to ensure service of professional quality. Typically, counselors carry a caseload of no more than three to five clients. This constraint is always kept in mind when a decision is made about accepting a new client.

While the students are expected to try a wide variety of treatment methods during their practicum, individual preferences often emerge after students have spent some time with the program. Some counselors prefer to work with clients only in one-to-one sessions, while others find group counseling to be more productive. Some gravitate toward family-centered counseling; others feel that working with their clients in a school setting holds the most promise. Skills in implementing various treatment methods vary, too. The needs of the clients are paramount, but team leaders try, whenever possible, to accommodate the volunteers' preferences.

Because the team leaders see the volunteers working with them so frequently, they are able to monitor closely how a counselor is performing and how much progress a client is making. They know both their counselors and the clients well. Thus, the team leaders will frequently recommend changes in treatment strategies and will sometimes reassign a client to another counselor when a particular counselor-client relationship has not worked. Figure 3.6 shows the form used by the team leaders to monitor their team's counseling activities and client progress.

Figure 3.6
TEAM LEADER TRACKING SHEET

TEAM LEADER _____

CREST WORKER	CLIENT	REFERRAL DATE	REFERRAL AGENCY	WHY TERM.	INDIV. COUNS.	GROUP COUNS.	FAMILY CONSULT.	TUTOR	TEST.	YSP CONSL.	IMPROVEMENT CLIENT HAS SHOWN: GREAT	SOME	LITTLE	COMMENTS
				TOTALS										

TOTALS

TEAM LEADER	
VOLUNTEER COUNSELORS	
VOLUNTEER TUTORS	
VOLUNTEER OTHER	

Student counselors typically spend no more than six months with Project CREST, thus making continuity of treatment for long-term clients a special concern. But even for clients whose treatment does not extend beyond six months there is the problem of semester breaks and vacations to consider. Providing continuity of treatment is the responsibility of the team leader, who must either reassign the client or personally assume counseling duties. This problem was made less pressing by changes in Florida's juvenile justice system introduced in 1978; young offenders presently remain on probation for shorter periods that more closely coincide with the time that volunteers spend with CREST. CREST does not necessarily terminate its relationship with a client at the end of this probation period if the youngster still needs and wants counseling. Again, it is the responsibility of the team leader, who is familiar with the particulars of each case, to match the client's needs with available resources.

3.6 Advisory Boards

The counselors and counselor aides are not the only volunteers who make significant contributions to Project CREST. In each of the counties it serves, CREST has recruited prominent citizens to serve on advisory boards that review the work of the project, offer suggestions for improvements, and help coordinate its activities with other efforts in the county to help delinquent youth. Advisory boards no longer meet regularly as in the past, but get together only when there is a specific need to meet.

The notion of establishing citizen advisory boards grew out of the project's funding crisis in 1975 when many people in the communities CREST then served joined in the fight to have the project included in the state budget. Police officers, teachers, school principals, clergymen, parents and others who knew about CREST's work effectively lobbied their legislators and other state officials. Their success in this effort convinced CREST's director of the value of forming permanent advisory boards.

The initial members were primarily those who had been active in the funding initiative, and many of those people have remained on the boards since that time. Members do not have specific terms of office; new members are recruited periodically to assure that all segments of the community are represented. There is no formally designated chairperson for the meetings; whoever has business to bring before the board will take the lead.

The input from the advisory boards helps CREST understand the needs of the communities they serve and to develop other resources to further the objectives of the project. In Columbia County, for example, a police officer serving on the advisory board is also affiliated with a local roller skating rink; the rink has been made available to CREST counselors for outings with

Recreational activities are an important part of the relationship between counselor and client.

their clients. A spin-off from Project CREST, the privately funded "Big Buddy" program, was a direct result of brain-storming sessions by the Columbia County advisory board to find new ways of helping troubled youngsters. This program pairs CREST clients with interested high school students who serve as confidants and role models, thus providing one more source of support for those youngsters. Additionally, the advisory board members have helped raise funds for unbudgeted CREST activities. Many have volunteered to drive CREST workers to meetings with their clients, an important supplement to the project's limited transportation budget.

The active participation of these advisory boards is an indication of their strong commitment to Project CREST and to the troubled youth of their communities. These citizen volunteers see the welfare of these youngsters as the responsibility of the whole community and have given generously of their time to further Project CREST's objectives. The project staff take this contribution seriously; they clearly see the boards as a vital component of their efforts.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND COSTS

A vital component of a counseling program like Project CREST is the effort made to evaluate the program's effectiveness. Because CREST is a supplement to standard probation services and requires additional funding, state governments or other funding agencies will want to see hard data showing the impact of the program upon clients. And probation officers, parents, and school officials need to know whether the services provided are worthy of their continued support and cooperation. During CREST's seven-year history, several evaluation efforts have been conducted by the project staff.[1] This chapter begins with a discussion of their most recent effort to date, a true experimental design with subjects randomly assigned to treatment and control conditions.[2] The results presented below come from Abt Associates' calculations made from CREST records. After this presentation, project costs are discussed, followed by a review of replication issues involved in the evaluation of a CREST-type project.

4.1 Evaluation

4.1.1 Method

During the first three months of 1976, probation officers referred a total of 70 potential clients, all adjudicated delinquents, to Project CREST. Using a random number table, the CREST staff assigned these subjects to one of two groups: the experimental or treatment group received CREST counseling, and the control group had no contact with CREST. The youngsters in both groups were on probation and were regularly monitored and counseled by their probation officers.

Within the first two weeks of the study, five subjects were dropped from the treatment group for a variety of reasons. One was receiving counseling elsewhere; one entered a residential drug treatment center; one was confined

in a state detention facility; and two moved with their families away from CREST's service area. At the same time, one subject in the control group also was committed to a state facility. Examination of records given to CREST by the Youth Services Program showed incomplete data for two other subjects in the control group, who were also dropped. Thus, there remained 30 subjects in the CREST group and 32 in the control group.

Youth Services Program records were examined to determine official complaints made against these youngsters by arresting officers, school officials, parents, and other citizens. All complaints required adjudication by either a state attorney or a judge. For those subjects reaching their 18th birthday during the follow-up period, police and sheriffs' records across the state were checked. Each complaint was categorized as a felony, misdemeanor (first or second degree), traffic offense, or other delinquent act. As specified in Florida law, repeat offenses for these juveniles were not assigned higher criminal status.[3]

A tally was made of the complaints for each youth in experimental and control groups for three separate time periods. The baseline period was that time preceding a youngster's referral to Project CREST. The treatment period was that time between referral and the end of the CREST treatment. The average treatment period for subjects in the treatment group was 6.5 months, and that figure was used to define the treatment period for all control group subjects. The follow-up period was divided into two intervals: (1) from the end of the treatment period sometime during 1976 through June 30, 1977; (2) from July 1, 1977 through June 30, 1978. These intervals will be referred to as the first- and second-year follow-ups, respectively.

4.1.2 Results

Demographic characteristics. To test the success of the randomization procedure, the investigators examined the demographic variables of age, sex, and race. Wide differences in the ages of the two groups were found; the average age of the CREST group was 14.5 years while control group subjects averaged 15.9 years, a statistically significant difference [t=3.13, df=60, p<.003].* In addition, it was discovered that 28 of the 32 control subjects were male, but only 16 of the 30 CREST subjects were male; this difference, again, proved to be significant [χ^2=7.19, df=1, p<.008 (corrected for continuity)]. These demographic differences between the two groups dictate that any treatment effects be interpreted with caution. The racial breakdowns for the two groups were quite similar, with 16 of the 32 control subjects and 17 of the 30 CREST subjects being black.

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* Unless otherwise indicated, all t tests reported in this chapter are two-tailed tests of significance.

Acts of misconduct. Figure 4.1 lists the number of complaints filed against subjects of both groups during the baseline, treatment, and follow-up periods; a listing for felonies is given separately. These data are reported as averages in Figures 4.2 and 4.3. Both groups of youngsters had nearly an equal number of complaints filed against them during the baseline period. This pattern continued during the treatment period [all complaints, t=1.05, df=59, ns; felonies, t<1] and extended through the first-year follow-up as well [all complaints t<1; felonies, t=1.26, df=55, ns]. But by the second-year follow-up a clear difference between the groups emerged. While subjects in the CREST group had an average of only 0.39 complaints filed against them during that year, the control group subjects had on average 1.38 complaints [t=2.54, df=55, p<.02]. The difference in number of felony complaints was marginally significant [t=1.89, df=55, p<.07].

The number of subjects in the control group having one or more complaints made against them during the second-year follow-up period was double the number in the CREST group (see Figure 4.4), although this difference was not statistically significant [z=1.62, ns]. The same pattern was found in the number of subjects having one or more felony complaints during that period. Those subjects in the CREST group who had one or more complaints filed against them posted an average of 1.83 complaints, while those in the control group showed an average of 3.33 complaints, a statistically significant difference [t=2.29, df=16, p<.04].

Because of the important differences between the two groups in sex composition, these same analyses were conducted for male subjects only; the small number of females in the control group prevented such analyses for that sex. Again, demographic characteristics were examined, and as for the samples as a whole, the racial make-up of the two groups of males was nearly identical. The age differences found in the samples as a whole were found for males, too. Thus, treatment effects must be viewed with this significant age difference between the two groups in mind. For males, no significant differences between the two groups in the number of complaints filed against them were found for any of the three periods of the study. Equal percentages of subjects in the two groups had one or more complaints filed against them during the important second-year follow-up period. However, these offenders who had received CREST counseling had an average of only 1.60 complaints listed during that time, while offenders in the control group posted an average of 3.56 complaints [t=2.51, df=12, p<.03].

The results of this evaluation study are strongly suggestive of Project CREST's effectiveness. The second-year follow-up period, during which nearly all of the subjects were removed from probationary status, seems to be especially important and suggests that CREST may help most of its clients in extending the effects of probation beyond the probation period itself.

School Performance. Unfortunately, measures of school performance were not collected as part of the randomized experiment just described. However, such

Figure 4.1

COMPLAINTS FILED AGAINST CREST AND CONTROL SUBJECTS DURING BASELINE, TREATMENT, AND FOLLOW-UP PERIODS

	CREST GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
Time Period	Number of Complaints	Number of Felonies	Number of Subjects[5]	Number of Complaints	Number of Felonies	Number of Subjects[6]
Baseline Period[1]	157	49	30	183	58	32
Treatment Period[2]	10	1	29	25	12	32
First-Year Follow-Up[3]	12	2	28	16	8	29
Second-Year Follow-Up[4]	11	5	28	40	20	29

Source: Abt Associates examination of CREST files.

[1] Period preceding a subject's inclusion in the study. Average length of this period was not calculated.

[2] Period from January or March, 1976 to end of treatment; the average treatment period was 6.5 months.

[3] Period from end of treatment through June 30, 1977.

[4] Period from July 1, 1977 to June 30, 1978.

[5] Missing information from Department of Youth Services record during treatment and follow-up periods for one case. One subject was confined to a state juvenile institution during the follow-up periods following commission of two crimes during the treatment period.

[6] Three subjects were inadvertently included in the CREST program during the follow-up periods.

Figure 4.2

AVERAGE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS FILED AGAINST CREST AND CONTROL GROUP SUBJECTS DURING BASELINE, TREATMENT AND FOLLOW-UP PERIODS

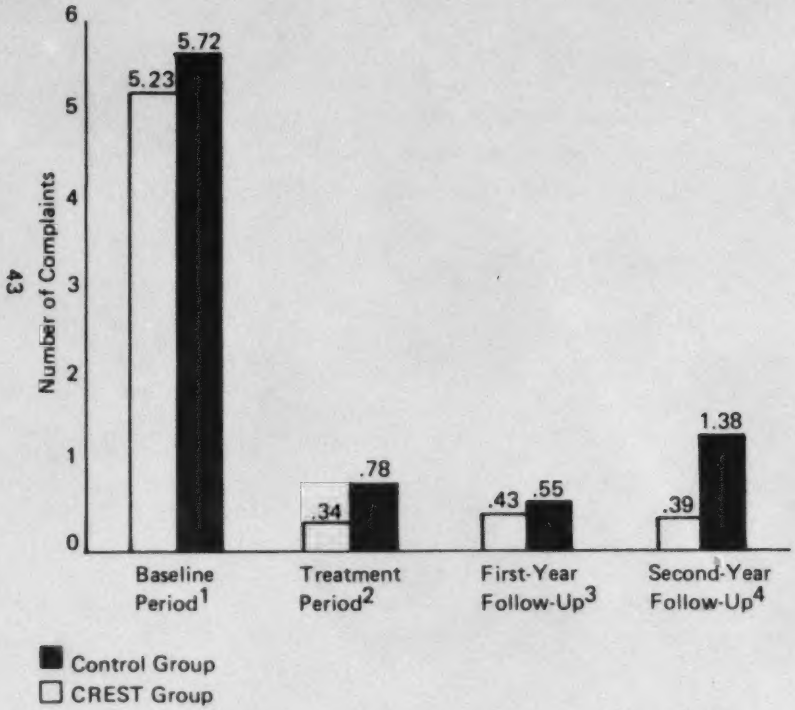
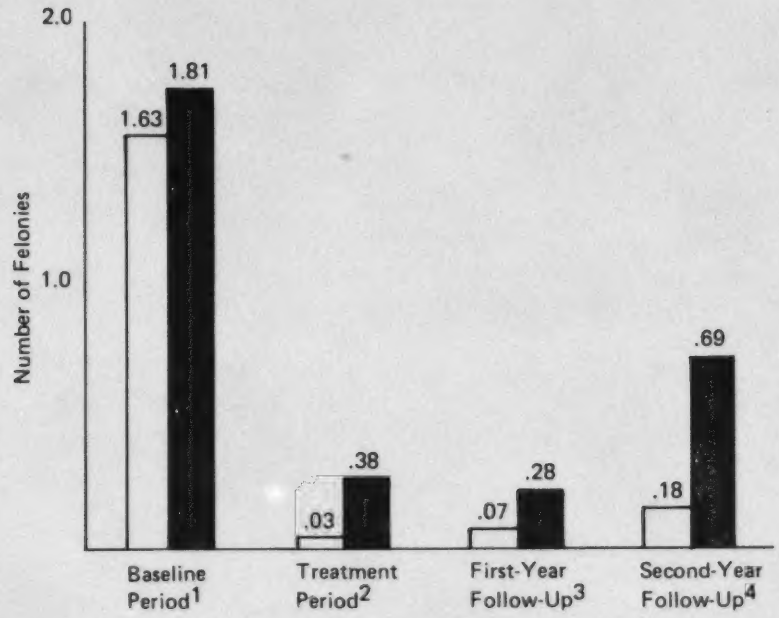


Figure 4.3

AVERAGE NUMBER OF FELONIES COMMITTED BY CREST AND CONTROL SUBJECTS DURING BASELINE, TREATMENT AND FOLLOW-UP PERIODS



Source: Abt Associates examination of CREST files.

[1] Period preceding a subject's inclusion in the study.

[2] Period from January or March, 1976 to end of treatment; the average treatment period was 6.5 months.

[3] Period from end of treatment through June 30, 1977.

[4] Period from July 1, 1977 to June 30, 1978.

Figure 4.4

NUMBER OF SUBJECTS WITH ONE OR MORE FILED COMPLAINTS DURING TREATMENT AND FOLLOW-UP PERIODS

	CREST GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
Time Period	N	(%)	Number of Subjects	N	(%)	Number of Subjects
Treatment Period[1]	8	(27.8)	29	10	(31.2)	32
First-Year Follow-Up[2]	8	(28.6)	28	10	(34.5)	29
Second-Year Follow-Up[3]	6	(21.4)	28	12	(41.4)	29

Source: Abt Associates examination of CREST files.

[1] Period from January, 1976 to end of treatment; the average treatment period was 6.5 months.

[2] Period from end of treatment through June 30, 1977.

[3] Period from July 1, 1977 to June 30, 1978.

measures were obtained for quasi-experiments conducted in earlier years by the CREST staff. The results from one of those investigations are described here.

Two important caveats to this particular study must be mentioned at the outset. First, subjects were not randomly assigned to conditions, a fact that introduces a host of alternative explanations for the study's results. Second, school performance measures can be difficult to obtain (see Section 4.3), and such difficulty was encountered here; data could not be obtained on these measures for nearly half of the subjects.

In this study, the CREST group consisted of 34 delinquents referred for counseling by their probation officers. The control group consisted of 31 delinquent youth, with 19 from the same counties as the CREST clients and 12 from a county not served by CREST. Data on these subjects were collected for two time periods: the baseline period was the school year previous to the year of the study; the experimental period extended from the start of CREST counseling to the end of that school year (June 1974). Because these two periods were not of equal length, the data were transformed to yearly rates.

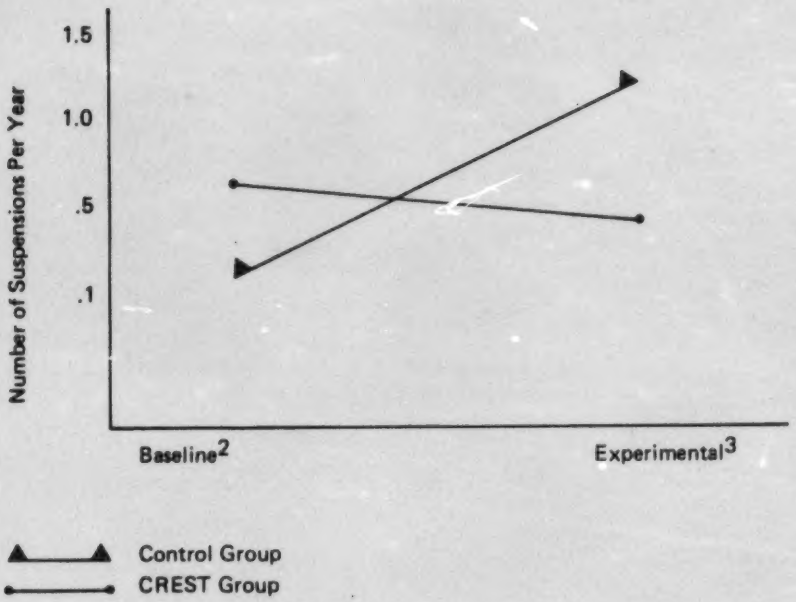
The results of this study do suggest that CREST counseling may affect clients' school performance. Figure 4.5 shows that the rate of school suspensions for the control group rose sharply between the baseline and experimental periods, whereas the rate for the CREST group declined slightly. Figure 4.6 shows a similar pattern of results for the yearly rate of school absences. Finally, the CREST group showed an improvement in academic achievement, as measured by grade point average (G.P.A.), during the experimental period (see Figure 4.7). In contrast, the control group showed a precipitous decline in G.P.A. during that same period. While these data do not prove definitively that CREST counseling will result in superior school performance, the strong pattern of positive results suggests that these outcome measures should be included as part of a thorough evaluation effort.

4.1.3 Achievement of Process Goals

In assessing a program like CREST, it is important to determine not only the effects of services upon clients, but also whether the program is actually delivering the services it promised. Almost every year since its inception, CREST has met or exceeded its service delivery goals. In its 1977-78 Annual Report, for example, Project CREST detailed the extent to which its goals for that year had been achieved:

CREST works not only with clients but with their families and schools.

Figure 4.5
RATE OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS: KEMP AND LEE (1977)[1]



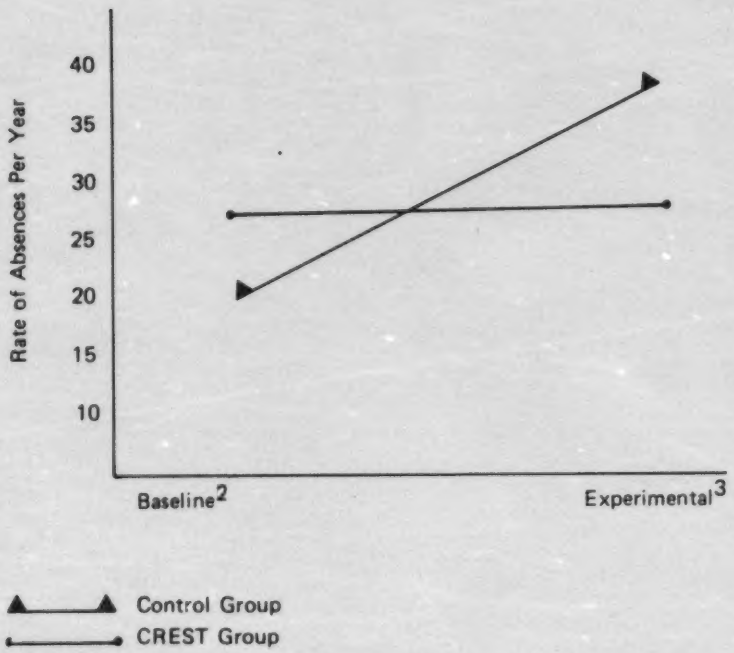
Source: Kemp, M. and Lee, R. Professional counseling and the juvenile offender: A field experiment. **Lambda Alpha Epsilon Journal**, 1977, **40**, 27-36.

[1] Subjects in this study were *not* randomly assigned to experimental conditions. Data were obtained for only 17 (50%) of the CREST subjects and 17 (55%) of the control group subjects.

[2] School year preceding the year of the study.

[3] Period from start of CREST counseling through the end of that school year (June 1974). The number of months in this period is not reported.

Figure 4.6
RATE OF SCHOOL ABSENCES: KEMP AND LEE (1977)[1]



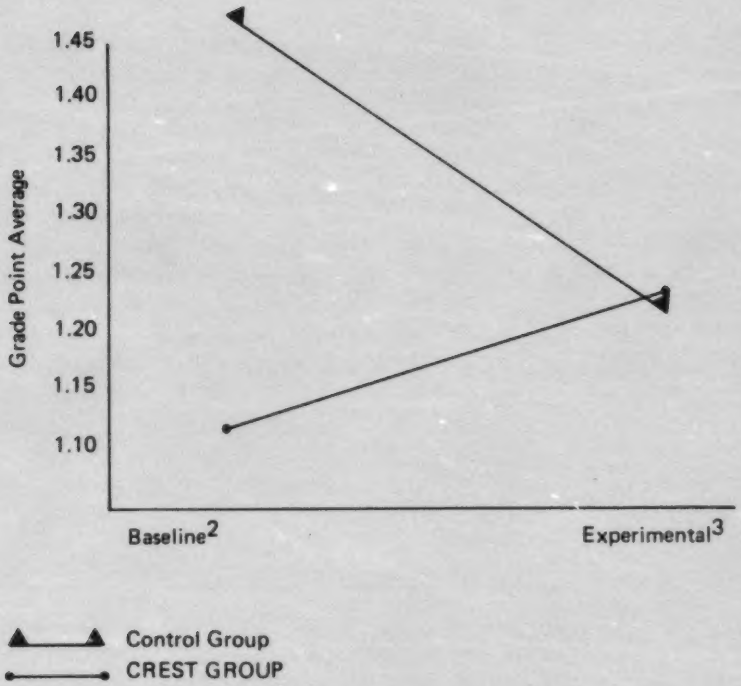
Source: Kemp, M. and Lee, R. Professional counseling and the juvenile offender: A field experiment. **Lambda Alpha Epsilon Journal**, 1977, **40**, 27-36.

[1] Subjects in this study were *not* randomly assigned to experimental conditions. Data were obtained for only 17 (50%) of the CREST subjects and 16 (52%) of the control group subjects.

[2] School year preceding the year of the study.

[3] Period from start of CREST counseling through the end of that school year (June 1974). The number of months in this period is not reported.

Figure 4.7
GRADE POINT AVERAGE: KEMP AND LEE (1977)[1]



Source: Kemp, M. and Lee, R. Professional counseling and the juvenile offender: A field experiment. **Lambda Alpha Epsilon Journal**, 1977, **40**, 27-36.

[1] Subjects in this study were *not* randomly assigned to experimental conditions. Data were obtained for only 20 (64%) of the CREST subjects and 16 (52%) of the control group subjects.

[2] School year preceding the year of the study.

[3] Period from start of CREST counseling through the end of that school year (June 1974). The number of months in this period is not reported.

- Ninety delinquent youths were to be provided with weekly individual counseling for an average of five months; this target was met exactly.

- Fifty families of delinquents were to be provided with counseling services; 53 families, in fact, received that counseling.

- Sixty delinquent youngsters were to be given extended group counseling and therapy. Actually, 84 youths received these services.

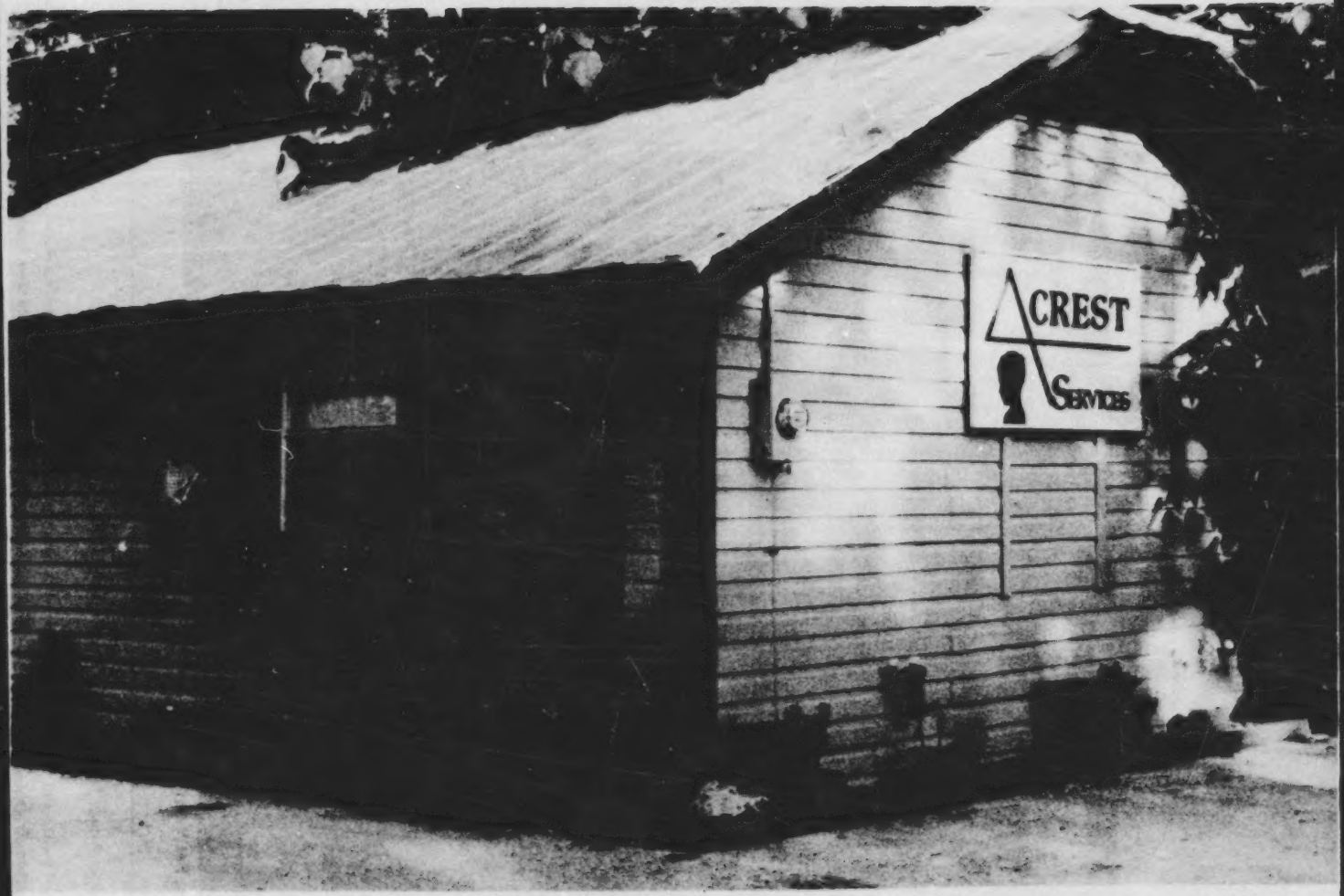
- Each CREST counselor was to consult weekly with each client's Youth Services Program probation officer. This goal was met.

In contracting with its funding agency, CREST updates its goals each year, consistent with anticipated funding and staffing levels and past goal achievement. CREST's goals for fiscal year 1979 are included in its contract with the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. A total of 150 adjudicated delinquents are to be provided weekly professional counseling services, with 120 receiving individual counseling, 30 receiving group counseling, and 25 receiving both, and at least 50 families will be given family counseling services. Meetings between CREST counselors and probation officers are to be bi-weekly.

4.2 Costs

Because CREST uses highly committed, trained volunteers and keeps its paid staff to a bare minimum, its costs have been remarkably low. The program's budget for fiscal year 1979 was just under $57,000 (see Figure 4.8). In addition to the project director, the assistant director (now replaced with a part-time administrative assistant), and the secretary, the paid staff includes three team leaders, who receive a salary roughly comparable to that of a graduate assistant at the university. The volunteers receive no stipends and use their own funds to buy meals or tickets to cultural or sports events for their clients. Another important factor in keeping costs down has been the goodwill of CREST's landlord who charges rent well below market value.

The project's annual report for 1977-1978 provides a view of the program's cost effectiveness. Figure 4.9 shows the results of the analysis reported there. Staff costs for probation services provided by the Gainesville district of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services were $436 per year per youth served for that year, some 1.7 times more than comparable figures for Project CREST. The project's budget for 1979 will



Project CREST is located in a residential section of Gainesville.

Figure 4.8

PROJECT CREST BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 1979

Budget Item		Cost
Salaries*		$48,036
Project Director (100%)	17,178	
Associate Director (65%)	8,282	
Team Leaders (50%), (3 at $6,380 each)	19,140	
Secretary (50%)	3,436	
Fringe Benefits		2,762
Travel (3 teams)		3,066
Supplies		480
Equipment		292
Rent**		1,200
Utilities		223
Telephone		715
Miscellaneous		160
Total Expenditures		$56,934

Source: Project CREST contract with the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Fiscal Year 1979.

*Status of employee is indicated in parentheses: 100% = full-time; 50% = half-time, etc.

**The rent paid by Project CREST is below the market value of the property.

Figure 4.9

STAFF COSTS PER YEAR PER YOUTH SERVED: YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM—PROJECT CREST—1977/1978

	Youth Services Program	Project CREST
Probation Staff Costs	$488,738[a]	$46,919[b]
Number of Youth Served	1,120	187
Cost Per Year Per Youth Served	436	251

Source: Project CREST, Annual Report, 1977-1978.

[a]Staff for District III (Gainesville area) office consisted of 28 youth counselors, three supervisors, and 13 clerical workers.

[b]Staff for Project CREST consisted of 34 volunteer counselors and tutors, three team leaders (half-time), one secretary (half-time), an education specialist (65% time), and a project director (full-time).

provide for approximately 102 hours of counseling per week; in contrast, the Youth Services Program can provide only about 40 hours of services to delinquent youth for the same amount of money. This analysis does show that CREST is a fairly inexpensive service; however, in making this comparison it must be emphasized that CREST is a supplement to probation services, not a substitute for them.

At this time, it is not possible to give a reliable estimate of the "savings," if any, realized by the state of Florida as a result of Project CREST. The major difficulty is that there is no clear way to assess what further involvement CREST clients would have had with Florida's juvenile justice system had they not received counseling. Different components of that system can provide figures for the money they spend per person; but a total of those average costs does not provide a useful index, for in using it, the assumption must be made that CREST clients would have had contact with every facet of the juvenile justice system. Similarly, it cannot be assumed that CREST clients would have had as much contact as would the "average" probated delinquent since those receiving CREST counseling are not a randomly drawn sample from that population. In addition, it is impossible to put a dollar amount on the intangible benefits incurred by society whenever a Project CREST youth turns away from delinquency as a result of his relationship with the project.

The best method by which to estimate actual savings to the state is to include a cost analysis as part of a true, long-term experiment with subjects randomly assigned to treatment and control groups (see Section 4.3). Differences in contact with the juvenile justice system between the two groups could be noted, and a cost savings could be estimated on that basis. This remains to be done.

4.3 Evaluation Replication Issues

Evaluation of a counseling program like CREST presents a set of unique design and measurement problems. This section will outline for program replicators a number of possible approaches to those problems.

4.3.1 The True Experimental Design

The optimal design for evaluating a CREST program is a true experimental design with youth referred by probation officers being randomly assigned to one of two groups: (1) a group receiving CREST counseling in addition to the services provided by probation officers; (2) a control group receiving

only those services provided by probation officers.* With large samples, random assignment of clients to conditions will ensure that extraneous variables that might influence the outcome measures will be distributed equally across the two conditions; thus, differences between conditions can be interpreted unambiguously as being due to differing treatments. As shown in Section 4.1, with relatively small samples, there is a chance that the randomization procedure will fail, and extraneous variables will not be distributed equally.

This design could be greatly strengthened by matching individuals on variables known or expected to be related to recidivism before the subjects are randomly assigned to conditions. Such variables might include sex, race, age, prior criminal record (including detention history), and severity of the last committed offense. After subjects are paired in this way, one of each pair is assigned randomly to the treatment group, and the other is placed in the control group. Obviously, matching subjects on all or a large subset of these variables requires that a large number of juveniles be referred to the counseling program. In practice, it will probably be possible only to pair individuals for various combinations of sex, race, and age.

When this kind of matching cannot be executed, the best alternative is frequency distribution matching. With this technique, the groups as a whole are made to be comparable on each matching variable, even though the individuals themselves have not been paired. For example, through the screening process, the groups might be made to have the same number of whites and blacks, males and females, and older and younger youths. However, this would not necessarily mean that the two groups would have an equal number of white, older males or an equal number of black, younger females. Clearly, matching by individuals is the preferred method.

While the true experimental design is best, as a practical matter it may be possible to use random assignment only when there are more referrals to the counseling program than can be served. If there are too few referrals, creation of a "no treatment" control condition may be difficult to justify to a funding agency or the project staff. Even when referrals do exceed the program's capacity, there may be some staff resistance to basing the provision of counseling on the "luck of the draw," rather than on the clients' needs or their expected responsiveness to treatment. However, both the staff and the funding agency should be made aware that only the results of a true experimental design with random assignment can be interpreted unambiguously. With this awareness may come full cooperation.

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* Using a normal-curve approximation, a statistical power analysis reveals that differences between conditions of the magnitude shown during the treatment period of the CREST experiment (Section 4.1) would have an 80% chance of leading to rejection of the null hypothesis with 92 subjects per condition (Harshbarger, T.R. Introductory Statistics: A Decision Map. New York: MacMillan, 1971, p. 473).

There are three major ways in which this true experimental design can be compromised. Preparations should be made for dealing with each:

- Subject self-selection

When participation in the CREST program is not mandated as a condition of probation or cannot otherwise be guaranteed, some subjects assigned to receive counseling (or their parents) may refuse it. Simply eliminating those subjects from the study or putting them in the control group would gravely compromise the experimental design. If client or parental approval must be secured, it is best to begin by first getting that approval, and then randomly assigning only the potential clients to the two experimental conditions. It should be made clear to the parents granting their permission that counseling may not be provided, but that their permission is needed in the event that counseling is available. If there are a large number of juveniles who refuse to participate, they can be viewed as a second comparison group, though not as part of the true experiment itself.

- Subject attrition

Some subjects assigned to the treatment condition may not attend all of their counseling sessions. It is desirable to define a certain minimum number of one-hour counseling sessions as constituting the "treatment" (e.g., ten sessions was used as a cut-off point by Project CREST). Those subjects failing to meet that requirement still must be included in the major data analyses that test the program's effectiveness. Of course, internal ("ex post facto") analyses that exclude those subjects can also be reported.

A different sort of subject attrition problem arises if subjects in either group are sent to a state detention or training facility near the end of treatment or during follow-up periods. This is made more complicated by the fact that detention will be based not only on the number of recently filed complaints or the severity of the last offense, but also on the individual's entire criminal record. Thus, one subject who commits two offenses during the treatment period may continue on probation, while another committing the same number of offenses, but having a longer history of trouble with the law, may be sent to a state facility. One solution to this problem would be for each subject confined to a state facility to be declared as a "missing case" during the period of detention. Of course, elimination of a subject in this way is a compromise of the true experimental design. But if the samples are large and the number of subjects being detained is small, it will not be a serious compromise. Alternatively, a monthly complaint rate can be computed for each subject. For subjects detained during the course of the experiment or its follow-up, this rate can be calculated for those months when they are still on probation. It will occasionally be found, however, that a period of detention will last a year or more, which means that a particular subject may be confined during the entirety of a follow-up period.

- Participation in other programs

There is a high probability that some subjects, especially those in the control condition, will participate in other kinds of treatment programs (e.g., drug or alcohol rehabilitation, psychological counseling, etc.) during the course of the experiment. From the standpoint of design, it is desirable to maintain the integrity of the experimental conditions and prohibit such participation. Ethically, this cannot be done. At best, the investigator can collect information about subjects' involvement in other programs so that internal analyses can be executed. However, such analyses must be ancillary. Those subjects receiving other forms of treatment cannot be omitted from the main test of CREST's effectiveness without jeopardizing its status as a true experiment.

4.3.2 Non-Equivalent Control Group Design

When random assignment of subjects to experimental conditions is not feasible, there is a quasi-experimental design that can be considered: the non-equivalent control group design. It is not a substitute for the true experimental design, however, which should be used if at all possible.

With this particular quasi-experimental design, a comparison is made between a group receiving CREST counseling and one that is not, as was the case for the true experimental design. The important difference, however, is that subjects are not randomly assigned to the two conditions. Most often, subjects assigned to the control condition will be adjudicated delinquents on probation who are not referred to CREST by their probation officers. In other cases, all subjects might have been referred to the program, but the staff will pick only some of them for counseling treatment. This type of design has been used in the past by the CREST program.[5]

The non-equivalent control group design suffers from one basic flaw. Because assignment to conditions is not random, the two groups will differ from one another on many dimensions, some of which may be importantly related to recidivism (e.g., age, prior record, etc.). These kinds of differences between the two groups make any reported treatment effects difficult to interpret. Even when pre-test scores might show the two groups to be comparable in terms of a variable such as past criminal record, other differences, such as demographic variables, may still account for any apparent treatment effects.

As was the case for the true experimental design, this quasi-experimental design can be strengthened by using matching to equate the treatment and control groups on certain key variables. While matching in this way puts the investigator on surer footing, the basic problems of the design remain. No

matter how many variables are used in a matching procedure, there are many others on which the two groups can differ. Only with random assignment will these variables--including those unmeasured or not even thought of--be distributed equally across the two conditions.

A variation on this design would involve creation of a control group in a nearby county that is not served by the CREST program. Probation officers in that county would identify those youngsters who would be referred to CREST were such a program available. The selection of such a control group might be further refined by matching individuals in that group to members of the treatment group. Although this design has its strengths, it does have certain flaws. The probation officers in the new area may be too unfamiliar with CREST to make referrals reliably, or their selection criteria may differ significantly from those used by the more experienced officers. A new element of variability is introduced here since the control subjects will be handled by different probation staffs; and because the subjects reside in different jurisdictions, there is a greater probability of interceding events (e.g., gang disturbances, changes in report procedures, and other environmental conditions) differentially affecting the two groups.

It should be noted that the problems cited under the discussion of the true experimental design--namely, subject self-selection, attrition, and subject participation in other programs--present equal difficulty for the non-equivalent control group design.

4.3.3 Outcome Measures

Most investigators will want to collect data for the treatment and control groups before, during and after the CREST counseling sessions. The first step, then, is to define each of these time periods. The baseline period can extend back an unlimited number of years, or it can be restricted to a period of time equivalent to the length of treatment, as has been done by the CREST evaluators. The follow-up period should probably be at least one or two years; if a lengthy period is used, division of that period into useful intervals, such as before and after removal of probation, is recommended.

Definition of the treatment period is more problematic. How should this period be defined for the no-treatment control group? When subjects have been matched before their random assignment to experimental and control groups, it is only necessary to make the control subjects' treatment period coincide with that of their experimental counterparts. In the absence of matching it is possible to randomly assign control group subjects to partners in the treatment group, and then define the treatment period for the control subjects in the same way. The least preferred alternative is to compute an average treatment time for the treatment group, and then to use that average

to define the treatment period for every control group subject. In failing to match the variability of treatment periods found in the treatment group, this procedure introduces a new source of threat to the internal validity of the study.

After establishing the before and after time periods, the second step is to identify the outcome measures to be used in evaluating the effectiveness of the CREST program. Two guidelines should be kept in mind at this point. First, methods of record-keeping that will be more thorough for one group than for another should be avoided; for example, using interviews with the subjects to derive a measure of recidivism will result in more accurate data for the treatment group, since the CREST counselors will have established rapport with their clients but not with those in the control group. Second, as much as possible, investigators should use records of acts of misconduct, school performance, and so on that are processed by people ignorant of the clients' involvement in CREST.

Acts of misconduct. Acts of misconduct can be differentiated as felonies, misdemeanors (first and second degree), traffic offenses, and other delinquent acts. An overall total or a total for each type of act can be tallied; alternatively, a monthly rate can be computed and reported for each time period of the study.* In general, it will be best to have access to records of complaints filed against each study participant, rather than acts adjudicated as delinquent. With the latter, the investigator must be concerned about probation officers, prosecutors, or judges being more (or less) prone to diverting acts of misconduct from adjudication. Even in the absence of this kind of obvious bias, different officials may have varying criteria for declaring an act as delinquent. These kinds of difficulties will not be totally absent when records of complaints are used, but they certainly will be less frequent. Also, it should be noted that when subjects gain legal adult status sometime during the treatment or follow-up periods, police records will have to be consulted. These records may be more difficult to secure, especially if the investigator must deal with departments elsewhere in the state or even out of state.

School performance measures. There are a number of possible measures of school performance, including attendance, number of suspensions or other disciplinary actions, and grades. Also, a self-administered questionnaire could be given to teachers, asking them to evaluate the subjects' progress in school and their deportment. Such measures are likely to require school

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* Data on acts of misconduct will tend not to be normally distributed. With very large sample sizes, the error resulting from applying parametric tests (e.g., the t-test) under these circumstances will be small enough to permit their use, especially if the alpha level is set at a more stringent level. However, in general, it is wise for the analyst to execute both parametric and non-parametric tests on the outcome measures.

administration and parental clearance, and would therefore demand a large Project CREST staff commitment.

Paper-and-pencil measures. With the pretest-posttest designs suggested here, it might be possible to administer various personality tests or inventories to the study participants and to use changes in those scores as an outcome measure. Based on their own experience, the CREST staff raises two cautionary notes about using such tests. First, many of the subjects have reading or attention problems and are unable to complete the inventories, so tests should probably be restricted to those that can be administered by way of an interview. Second, the design requires the inventories to be administered at two separate times, thereby incurring scheduling problems, and possibly requiring a large staff commitment.

NOTES

1. Kemp, M., and Lee, R. Project CREST: A third year experimental study. Unpublished manuscript: Project CREST, 1975. Kemp, M., and Lee, R. Professional counseling and the juvenile offender: A field experiment. Lambda Alpha Epsilon Journal, 1977, 40, 27-36. Lee, R., Clawson, L., and L'Abbate, S. After CREST, What? A two-year follow-up study. Unpublished manuscript: Project CREST, 1979. Lee, R. and Haynes, N.M. Counseling juvenile offenders: An experimental evaluation of Project CREST. Community Mental Health Journal, 1978a, 14, 267-271. Piercy, F., and Lee, R. Effects of a dual treatment approach on the rehabilitation of habitual juvenile delinquents. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 1976, 19, 482-492.

2. Lee, R. and Haynes, N.M. Counseling delinquents: Dual treatment revisited. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 1978b, 22, 130-133. Lee, R., and Klopfer, C. Counselors and juvenile delinquents: Toward a comprehensive approach. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1978, 57, 194-197. The earlier attempts (Kemp and Lee, 1976, 1977; Piercy and Lee, 1976) relied on quasi-experimental designs with non-random assignment (see Section 4.3).

3. "Listing of misdemeanors and special delinquent acts: Degree and statute." Tallahassee, Florida: State of Florida, Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, 1978.

4. Kemp & Lee, 1977, op. cit.

5. Kemp & Lee, 1977, op. cit. Piercy & Lee, 1976, op. cit.

CHAPTER 5
REPLICATION ISSUES

Project CREST has woven community, academic and law enforcement resources into a well-integrated network for helping delinquent youngsters. With the dual treatment concept as its foundation, CREST has proven itself to be a valuable addition to the probation services provided by Florida's Youth Services Program. Moreover, the project has emerged as an important practicum site for the University of Florida's graduate students in counselor education to refine and improve their counseling skills. CREST's impressive record of service should be an encouragement to juvenile authorities, professional counselors, and university faculty who see a need for a similar program in their communities.

A prerequisite to the establishment of a CREST project is the close proximity of a university that offers graduate-level training in counselor education or counseling psychology. What sets Project CREST apart from many other volunteer programs is the level of training of its student counselors. These students have made a professional commitment to a career in counseling. Because they are required to do field work for their advanced degrees and are closely supervised by their faculty advisors, a level of accountability is built in that would not be possible were these volunteers simply recruited from the community at large. Thus, the university is an indispensable part of CREST and should assume a major role in the development of any similar program. There are more than 500 graduate programs in counseling throughout the United States; in accordance with standards proffered by the American Personnel and Guidance Association, all of these programs require degree candidates to complete a prescribed number of hours of field work with community agencies.

The cooperation of the university must be secured in the first stages of planning for a CREST program. In many cases, members of the faculty will propose the project to their colleagues. But if the initiative is taken by someone from within a state's youth services agency or by a professional counselor, it is recommended that they identify a faculty member who can meet with the department chairman and argue for its inclusion as a practicum site before a meeting of the faculty. Once this is accomplished, full planning for the project can proceed.

5.1 Initial Planning

Early contact must be made with local juvenile authorities to explore how the community can benefit from a CREST program. These meetings should include not only probation officers and other youth services personnel, but also law enforcement officers, judges and school officials. What are the needs of the community? With what types of youngsters do these authorities most need help? What kind of help? How can the proposed project work with them to meet those needs? Bringing these authorities in at the initial planning stages gives them a stake in the program and will facilitate the kind of working relationship that is needed for the future success of the project.

Importantly, probation officers must be made to see that the services provided by a CREST project are intended to supplement and not to substitute for their own work. No volunteer program could survive in an atmosphere of competition. Essentially, then, the probation officers must be sold on the dual treatment concept and the complementary roles of probation and counseling. Recent changes in Florida law, which require the probation officers to monitor their clients' compliance with court-ordered sanctions, has made the need for this kind of approach quite obvious. But even in states that emphasize rehabilitation rather than control of youthful offenders, probation officers may be found to have neither the time nor the confidence of their clients to provide adequate counseling.

In these planning sessions with youth services personnel, more specific issues must at some point be addressed. First, the group of youngsters to be targeted for counseling must be identified. Limits must be placed on the number of clients to be served. Which youngsters stand to benefit most from the kind of counseling that will be provided? Definition of this group will be influenced greatly by the structure and operation of the state's juvenile justice system; for example, if there are few diversion programs and youthful offenders are automatically placed on probation, the selection criteria must be more specific than those now used by the Florida YSP and Project CREST.

Second, the team structure of the CREST project should fit the organization of the state's youth services agency. It was for this reason that Project CREST divided its teams by counties. In urban areas some other scheme will probably be needed. Project CREST's experience has shown that there is an advantage in having a team leader work with a clearly identified group of probation officers. Such groups could be identified either geographically or administratively.

Finally, a system for referral of clients to the CREST project must be devised. Project CREST's working relationship with YSP probation officers has permitted this referral process to become relatively informal. In other

states, more formal assessments of client needs and prognosis may be necessary. These planning sessions should also focus on what records must be kept and how client progress and counselor performance are to be monitored.

As indicated before, discussions with faculty members must also be initiated during the early stages of planning. Most, if not all, graduate-level counseling programs will have a practicum program in operation; the faculty must be convinced that a CREST site would be a positive addition to that program. Convincing these educators that the practicum experience would be a valuable one for their students will depend largely on the reputation and professional standing of those making the proposal. An additional concern of the faculty about a CREST project will be whether the program would be best administered through the university itself or as an independent agency. Some departments, in fact, may prefer to operate their own counseling programs in order to maintain stricter control over the counseling experience of their students.

5.2 Funding Alternatives

Possible sources of funding for a counseling program like Project CREST include federal and state agencies, local governments, private foundations, and the universities themselves.

Funds are awarded to each state by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration for allocation to criminal justice projects. The size of these so-called "formula grants" is based on a state's population. The states are given discretion in the allocation of those funds; individual projects can apply for formula grant funding through the appropriate State Planning Agency authorized to disperse LEAA funds. But new projects should not expect to secure funds from this source quickly; allocation plans are made far in advance of the actual disbursement of funds. Once such funding is secured, it may be short-lived; the money is designed to help the program get started, not to support it indefinitely. Curtailment of this funding must be anticipated and plans made to obtain an alternative source of support. As reported in Chapter 2, Project CREST, through the efforts of its director and a vocal constituency, eventually received support from the State of Florida.

The purchase of services from private vendors, rather than direct provision of those services, is a growing trend among state and local governments. This mechanism, as noted in Chapter 2, provides government agencies with greater flexibility and permits them to closely monitor service delivery through annual contract reviews. It was through this kind of arrangement that Project CREST was funded by Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. This may prove to be the best source of stable, long-term funding for this type of program. State regulations should be carefully

reviewed by program planners to assure that the project is legally qualified to receive such funds. For example, some states require that purchase-of-service contracts be awarded only to non-profit corporations. CREST was so incorporated in order to enter a contract with HRS.

In certain locations, private foundations may be a possible source of funds. Some of these foundations target grant money specifically for juvenile justice programs; others restrict funding to certain geographical areas. As is the case with LEAA grants, these foundation funds may be intended only to provide seed money to help establish a new service and may not be a reliable source of long-term funding.

Finally, the federal government has awarded funds to some academic departments for the training and financial support of their graduate students. Once awarded, these grants are administered by the university. It may be possible to fund a CREST project through a counselor education or counseling psychology program using these monies. In addition, application for such grants could be made with the CREST project offered as part of the department's training curriculum.

It is important for the program planners to have a potential funding source in mind at an early stage. The amount and source of available funds will have a profound effect on the structure and operation of the project. As noted in Chapter 2, Project CREST utilized volunteers rather than paid graduate students when Columbia County could not provide matching funds for the LEAA grant. This concern about funding must continue throughout the life of the project. Careful records must be kept and evaluation studies must be executed to convince a funding agency that the project is having a positive impact on its clients (see Chapter 4).

5.3 Implementation Issues

Once a CREST program is in place, there are several issues that must be considered before the project can be fully implemented. First, the CREST director must finalize the project's arrangements with the probation officers and the youth services agency. Agreement must be reached on the target group to be counseled and the specific criteria that will be used to identify that group. The details of the referral process, including what procedures will be followed if the CREST project and the youth services agency happen to disagree on a referral, and the attendant record-keeping must be worked out. As noted earlier in this chapter, discussion of these issues should start during the early planning for the project.

There are other procedures and policies that must be finalized as well. A detailed description of how Project CREST resolved these issues can be found in Chapter 3:

- Treatment Philosophy. What are the objectives of the counseling that will be offered to the project's clients? Will treatment goals be made explicit or not? What therapy methods will the volunteers be encouraged to use? What clinical "stance" will be suggested to them (e.g., non-authoritarian, directive, etc.)?

- Staffing. The number of full- and part-time paid employees will depend largely on the level of funding the project has received. What level of services will the budget permit? How many teams can there be? What salaries can be provided? Will an effort have to be made to recruit actively for volunteers? The criteria for selecting the team leaders, especially when the project is first starting, must be considered. They are the key to making the team approach work. How will administrative responsibilities be divided?

- Screening Volunteers. A major consideration is at what point in their graduate careers the students will take their practica. What courses must they have had before they are qualified to handle clients? Will faculty recommendations be required? Must the students have earned certain grades in order to qualify?

- Caseload Size. The caseloads of individual counselors must be maintained at a level that allows a good relationship with the clients to be established. This will depend on the number of hours per week that students must spend with the agency to fulfill their requirement, the difficulty of the cases, and the skills of the individual counselors. Project CREST, as noted before, assigns three to five clients to each counselor.

- Counselor Training. An introductory workshop or seminar is necessary to acquaint new volunteers with the project and the state's juvenile justice system. Working with the university faculty, a decision must be made on what topics will be covered. Weekly staff meetings that reinforce and extend this initial workshop are recommended.

- Staff Supervision. The glue that holds together the Project CREST organization is the structured supervision and guidance that is provided the volunteer counselors. Weekly meetings between the counselors and their fellow team members, the project director, their faculty advisors, and the probation officers guarantee that the students receive extensive feedback on their counseling efforts and

suggestions for alternative therapy methods. Formal arrangements for these meetings must be made. It should be emphasized again that these volunteers are made accountable for their performance as counselors through the university's degree requirements. Professionally committed to a career in counseling, these students will always be seeking to improve their counseling skills in response to this feedback.

- Counselor Aides. The help that Project CREST is able to provide for its clients is greatly augmented by its counselor aides. Many delinquent youngsters have problems in school, which is in part due to their frustration with their learning difficulties. The work these aides do as tutors is an important part of CREST's program. Again, it is important that these students do this work as part of their undergraduate studies; the key to successful utilization of volunteers is accountability.

- Continuity of Treatment. Provisions must be made for adequate coverage of cases during student vacations and semester breaks, and new counselors must be assigned to long-term clients when others finish their practica with CREST and move on to other sites. The team structure makes these transitions easier, but careful consideration must be given to how they will be handled in a smooth and orderly fashion.

- Transportation. A budget line for transportation should be included as part of the project's funding request. Though receiving some direct support for transportation from HRS, Project CREST has had to rely on volunteers to help with travel arrangements. The CREST teams generally travel together by car to a central location in the community they serve; volunteers, often advisory board members, then drive the different counselors to meet with their clients. The budget does not cover trips aside from those undertaken for the regularly scheduled visits with clients; the volunteers bear the cost of these extra trips and must make their own arrangements. Other projects may wish to have these trips covered in their budget.

- Privacy Laws. The quality of feedback that the student volunteers get from their faculty advisors is enhanced by those advisors being able to listen to tape recordings of the students' sessions with their clients. State law regarding client privacy and the procedures that must be followed to obtain informed consent from clients and parents must be examined.

5.4 Building a Constituency

Building a strong relationship with the university faculty and juvenile authorities is an essential component to Project CREST. These groups will form the nucleus of a constituency to support the work of the program in the community. Broadening that constituency to include school personnel, parents, civic organizations and the general public will depend, of course, upon the performance record of the project.

Recognizing the need for this broad-based constituency, the project leadership should take the initiative in making the public aware of the project's goals and its accomplishments. CREST's project director has spoken before various professional groups and civic organizations in the Gainesville area and has made materials available to the press and public officials. As noted in Chapter 2, these efforts paid dividends when CREST needed to secure state funding; taking these steps only after the financial crisis arose may well have resulted in the project not receiving this funding.

As mentioned before, the citizen advisory boards are perhaps the most effective way to encourage community support. Beyond that, these boards have proven to be a valuable resource for the project in its attempts to improve and broaden its program for helping delinquent youngsters. CREST's own boards grew out of the financial crisis in 1975; it is recommended to replicators that these boards be built into the organization of their program from the beginning.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the many issues that must be considered in replicating Project CREST in other communities and has offered an outline to follow in obtaining community support and funding for the program. Obviously, this plan must be tailored to fit the conditions in a particular state or locality. Thus, this chapter has been presented only as a general guide. It is clear that with strong leadership and imagination, Project CREST can be made to work in other communities.

APPENDIX

FORMS USED BY CREST COUNSELORS TO RECORD CLIENT PROGRESS AND COUNSELING ACTIVITIES

Progress Report of Project CREST Treatment

Initial Report_____ Progress Report_____

Name_____Age____Address_____

Phone_____School_____

DYS Counselor_____CREST Counselor_____

Case Opened_____Case Closed_____

1. Evaluation of the Problem: (a) School____, (b) Family____, (c) Peer Group____, (d) Vocational____, (e) Other (Specify)_____

2. Treatment strategies of CREST counselor: (a) Counseling with the child____, (b) Consultation with DYS____, (c) Vocational Counseling____, (d) Family Counseling____, (e) Consultation with parents____, (f) Teacher conference____, (g) Other (Specify)_____.

3. Goals of CREST counselor: (a) Improved school functioning____, (b) Improved family communication____, (c) Improved interpersonal interaction____, (d) Improved self-concept____, (e) Improved sense of responsibility____, (f) Other (Specify)_____.

4. Basic Theoretical Position: (a) Gestalt therapy____, (b) Client-Centered counseling____, (c) Reality Therapy____, (d) Rational-Emotive Therapy____, (e) Play Therapy____, (f) Behavioral____, (g) Other (Specify) _____.

   Comments:

5. Counseling Techniques Employed: Active listening____, role playing____, fantasy____, systematic desensitization____, operant conditioning____, dream interpretation____, behavioral contracts____, token reinforcements____, vocational exploration____, other (specify)_____.

   Comments:

Final Report of Project CREST Treatment

Name_____ CREST Counselor_____

Date_____

I. Instructions: Mark "X" in (____) for each goal you chose for this client. Then, for each chosen goal, evaluate this client's movement during the time you have been seeing him. This judgement should be based on your own expert perceptions.

1. (____) improved school functioning

improved _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ worsened
no change

2. (____) improved family communication

improved _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ worsened
no change

3. (____) improved interpersonal interaction

improved _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ worsened
no change

4. (____) improved self concept

improved _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ worsened
no change

5. (____) improved sense of responsibility

improved _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ worsened
no change

6. (____) other (specify _____)

improved _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ worsened
no change

II. Compared to other clients you have worked with, how would you rate your success with this particular client?

great success _____ _____ _____ _____ average _____ _____ _____ less than I hoped for

Quarter_____
Week of_____

STAFF ACTIVITY LOG

CREST WORKER_____
TEAM LEADER_____

DATE	CLIENT	TIME PERIOD	TOTAL TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS

*NOTE
WEEKLY TOTAL TIME SPENT IN TRAVEL_____HRS.

Exemplary Projects Review Board

The following individuals served on the Exemplary Projects Review Board in 1979:

State Criminal Justice Council

Douglas R. Cunningham, Executive Director
Office of Criminal Justice Programs
Sacramento, California

David O'Brien, Director
Governor's Committee on Criminal Administration
Topeka, Kansas

Fred Wileman, former Acting Executive Director
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Madison, Wisconsin

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